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Speech Discours

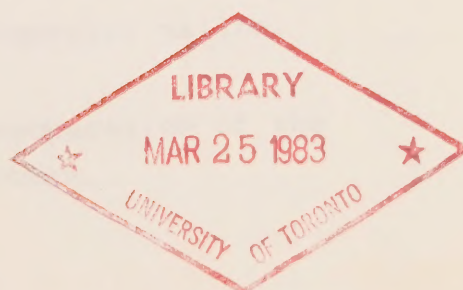
THE HON. JOHN ROBERTS

MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

ADDRESS TO THE P.A.C.E. MEETING

OTTAWA

MARCH 9, 1983



Canada



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An interesting automotive trend has developed. A few blocks from this building you'll probably find an enormous, eyecatching billboard, displaying an aggressive looking automobile, and the legend, "Street Legal". The so-called muscle cars are making a comeback. One manufacturer's ads stress that the car that was "virtually legislated off the highways" is again available. Previously staid Volvo has switched to performance oriented advertising, and even Datsun is now telling potential customers to "shift into awesome".

There are two things about this new generation of high performance cars that I find encouraging: they will be equipped with catalytic converters, and they will run on lead free gasoline. These new automobiles are the pride of the industry, and their motors prove that significant technical and engineering advances can be made, without relying on a crutch that is a major environmental poison: leaded gasoline.

Lead is added to gasoline not as many believe to increase mileage, but to boost octane. These new high performance cars require high octane gas, but they don't require lead. They demonstrate that we already have, and are using, the technology to do away with leaded gasoline. That's important for the present - it's also important for the future. Catalyst equipped, lead free gas burning vehicles are an important part of our efforts to reduce automotive emissions of NO_x - a significant component of acid rain and other environmental problems.

We have known for a long time that lead in gasoline is harmful, even dangerous. That is why Canada in 1975, set a maximum limit for lead in gasoline at 3.5 grams/imperial gallon.

That regulation was worked out with the cooperation of the petroleum industry, and it has been a success.

Lead emissions declined dramatically, from the then current 14 000 tonnes per year to 8 000 tonnes per year.

Now, however, the straight line decrease in emissions has leveled off, and it is expected to remain in the 6 to 8 000 tonne range, until the year 2000. Indeed, there are indications that, unless we are careful, lead emissions might again begin to rise.

Present Canadian automotive emission standards can often be met without the use of catalytic converters, and they have not been installed in new cars to the extent that was first predicted. Chrysler has continued to produce lead tolerant vehicles, and has used the fact that their cars run on so called "cheaper" leaded gas to maintain their market share. In reaction, GM, which had led the way by equipping the majority of their cars with catalysts, has recently decided to market a lead tolerant vehicle in Canada in order to regain market shares, and may follow up with several additional models.

There is other disturbing news in the air. My Department closely monitors the use of lead additives. My officials tell me that in the past 12 months, average lead content of gasoline has been edging up.

At the same time that the use of lead in gas seems to be increasing, there is mounting evidence that lead is even more harmful than previously thought. The decline in lead levels that has occurred since 1975 does not do enough to safeguard the health of Canadians.

Medical science indicates that the health problems posed by lead contamination are more subtle than previously suspected, and can be caused by amounts of lead quite a bit lower than had been considered "safe". My colleague the Minister of Health has recently issued a report summarizing current information on the health effects of lead, and the contribution of leaded gasoline to human lead exposure. The report shows that there is serious cause for concern.

Children are particularly at risk. They absorb lead more readily than adults, and a child's lower body weight results in a proportionately increased dose. The lead remains more active in their bodies, the absorption of lead threatens their development.

Some of the effects have been lower IQs, impaired hand/eye coordination, shorter attention spans, and speech and auditory difficulties. Other studies have noted behavioral effects in primates with lead levels only slightly higher than those found in urban children.

Further, lead in gasoline is the largest single source of lead emissions into our environment, accounting for roughly two-thirds of total atmospheric lead releases in Canada.

It is time to reexamine our strategy for reducing and eliminating the release of lead into the environment.

The United Nations Environment Program and the World Health Organization recently compared human exposure to lead in ten countries, under strictly controlled conditions. Mexico had the highest median lead levels in blood. Mexico also had the highest concentrations of lead in gasoline of any of the participating countries. Mexico City is furthermore a city with extremely heavy traffic. While no Canadian city has the population density of Mexico City, 93 per cent of our population do live in areas where 75 per cent of Canadian gasoline is burned. Tokyo is another big city with extremely heavy traffic--yet Tokyo had the lowest blood levels of lead. Why? Almost all the gasoline used is unleaded.

Detrimental effects to human health are the principal cause of concern but growing evidence indicates that there are also environmental implication's. High levels of lead have been found in some areas in fish and wildlife.

The Common Market countries, Switzerland, Sweden and Austria all have moved or are moving to a maximum allowable lead content of 0.15 grams/litre. In the United States, since November of 1982, the limit has been 0.29 grams/litre. In Japan, a limited number of vehicles can use a premium blend with 0.19 grams/litre; otherwise they must run on unleaded.

By comparison, Canada's limit works out to a whopping 0.77 grams/litre, more than two and one half times the amount of lead permitted in the United States.

The scientists at the Department of Health and Welfare advise that there is a sufficient preponderance of evidence that states that lower levels of lead than previously suspected can have a harmful effect on human health, and that the use of lead additives in gasoline contributes substantially to the risks involved. It is their duty to make that assessment; it is mine to act on it. Given the facts that they provided, I believe that Canada's present standard for lead content in gasoline, 3.5 grams/imperial gallon, is far too high.

It is my Department which enforces the present Clean Air Act. That is why Health and Welfare came to us with their report on the effects of lead in the environment. We have the power, through the Clean Air Act, to control the amount of lead in gasoline. The more we curtail the use of lead additives, the greater the benefits to Canadian society.

More and more people are coming to hold this opinion. There has been a sharp upswing in public interest in this issue. Stories have appeared recently on lead and human health, on consumers and the price differential between leaded and unleaded gasoline, on the gap between Canada's standards and those of the rest of the world, and on the need for regulatory reform in this area. Public concern is mounting.

In response to this concern, and in response to the facts that I have outlined today, I have concluded that it is overwhelmingly in the interests of Canadian society to tighten our standards. The case against lead is convincing. No doubt scientists will be able to do more research, dispute details, and argue fine points. Because we're dealing with biological sciences absolute proof may be virtually unobtainable. I'm well aware of the cost-benefit approach which argues for a burden of proof to be satisfied before any action is justified. When the health of children is so much at stake, the onus of proof lies heavily on those who argue against action.

Other nations have set the standards that they deem best for lead emissions within their borders; Canada must do the same. It is my judgement that the best policy for Canada to pursue would be to move, as quickly as possible, to reduce significantly lead in gasoline. I have decided that the best way for us to do this is through the regulatory instruments that we already have, and that have thus far served us well.

I am therefore proposing that present regulations under the Clean Air Act be amended to deal effectively with the use of lead additives in gasoline.

This Saturday, March 12, my Department will publish its intent to make regulatory changes in the Canada Gazette. We will release the data which formed the basis for our decision, and there will be a sixty day discussion period for all Canadians to come forward with their ideas and comments on such changes and how they can best be implemented. A Socio-Economic Impact Analysis will also be done. I will review the material that is put forward during this consultative process, and will take note of any substantive presentations before conferring with my Cabinet colleagues on the final recommendations. When the Cabinet reaches a decision, the final regulatory changes will be passed by Order-in-Council.

I think such regulatory improvement is absolutely necessary to safeguard the health of Canadians. I also think that the reduction of lead in gasoline is an environmental imperative, one that all sectors of Canadian society should work together to achieve. Obviously, the petroleum industry has a key role to play in promoting the changes we need.

During the sixty day consultation period I look forward to hearing from industry and labor, car owners and commuters, consumers and environmentalists. My Department would welcome advice on how best to phase down leaded gasoline. For instance, there is the question of whether it will be necessary to make available limited supplies of leaded gasoline for use in vehicles such as heavy trucks and antique automobiles.

I know that catalyst-equipped cars running on lead free gasoline are at least 4 per cent more fuel efficient than non-catalyst or lead tolerant vehicles and that the octane boosting purpose of lead could be easily achieved by further refining I know that higher than required octanes are produced.

I know that the refining costs for lead free gasoline are about a half a cent more per litre than leaded. So the consumer would pay more at the pump. But lead free gasoline saves on spark plug fouling, and is free of corrosive lead vaporizing chemicals. Tune-ups, oil changes and exhaust system changes would therefore be less frequent. Lead free gasoline is clearly a superior product.

And lead free gasoline could actually be cheaper to use than leaded. My engineering experts estimate that the additional cost for lead free gasoline would be recouped by a consumer savings in fuel and maintenance equivalent to 1.1 cents per litre. This certainly would help to offset the approximately 2.2 cents per litre extra cost for lead free which shows up at the pumps and which includes not only refining costs but also taxes and marketing costs.

Out of a concern for the health of Canadians, automakers should reconsider any proposals to increase the market penetration of lead tolerant cars. Emphasis should be placed instead on the continued use of catalytic converter technology, which has economic, health and environmental advantages including the control of NO_x emissions.

I have not even tried to factor into the equation the enormous health and social costs of our completely unnecessary reliance on this environmental poison.

The menace of lead is still with us, and further action is needed. I am confident that your industry will help us respond to the challenge.

The goal is set: significant reduction of lead in gasoline. Regulatory means to that end will be drafted. These regulations will have an impact, one that I hope can be minimized by close cooperation and prompt anticipatory action.

My greatest concern in this matter is that the serious threat of lead contamination of the environment be met with all necessary speed. I'm sure that I can count on the full cooperation of the petroleum industry.

Minister
Environment Canada

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Environnement Canada

Speech Discours

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY THE
HONOURABLE JOHN ROBERTS,
TO THE
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1983
TORONTO



I SHOULD PREFACE MY REMARKS BY SAYING THAT IT IS ALWAYS PLEASANT TO FIND MYSELF PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED. I'M NOT ALWAYS IN THIS HAPPY POSITION. MY MAIN JOB IS TRYING TO CHANGE OLD HABITS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS OUR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. THIS SORT OF PERSUASION, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE COSTS OF CHANGE ARE SUBSTANTIAL IS - MORE OFTEN THAN NOT - RECEIVED WITH SOMETHING SHORT OF ENTHUSIASM.

WHEN I ANNOUNCED LAST MONTH, AT A MEETING OF THE PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, MY PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE REGULATIONS UNDER THE CLEAN AIR ACT WHICH DEAL WITH THE ALLOWABLE LEVEL OF LEAD ADDITIVES IN GASOLINE, I DIDN'T EXPECT MY STATEMENT TO BE GLEEFULLY RECEIVED...AND IT WASN'T. BUT HAVING HAD SOME EXPOSURE TO THE EFFECTS AND REACTIONS FROM ARGUING MY CASE AGAINST ACID RAIN, I'M NO LONGER SURPRISED THAT SOMETIMES THE MOST I CAN GET OUT OF MY AUDIENCE IS GLUM SILENCE.

MY DETERMINATION TO ACT, HOWEVER, CAME FROM THE ASSURANCE, THE CONVICTION THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO MOVE AGAINST THE POLLUTION OF OUR ATMOSPHERE BY EXHAUST FUMES FROM LEADED GASOLINE, AND END THE DANGER TO THE HEALTH OF CANADIANS - ESPECIALLY OUR CHILDREN - FROM THIS POISONOUS SUBSTANCE. RECENT REPORTS ON STUDIES MADE FOR MY DEPARTMENT BY HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA, AND BY PRIVATE CONSULTANTS SHOWED ME THAT THE PRESENT ALLOWABLE LEAD CONTENT OF LEADED GASOLINE - 0.77 GRAMS PER LITRE OR 3.5 GRAMS PER IMPERIAL GALLON - IS JUST TOO HIGH FOR OUR OWN GOOD. IT MUST BE REDUCED.

ONE OF THESE REPORTS INDICATES THAT THE CONTRIBUTION OF LEADED GASOLINE TO THE TOTAL LEAD INTAKE OF CHILDREN IS 57%. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOME CHILDREN MAY BE EXPOSED TO MUCH HIGHER THAN NORMAL LEVELS OF LEAD, OR MAY SUFFER FROM BEHAVIORAL AND POSSIBLE ADVERSE BIOCHEMICAL EFFECTS AS A RESULT OF LEAD INTAKE.

NO DOUBT MORE RESEARCH CAN BE DONE - AND USEFUL RESEARCH. BUT THE RESEARCH NOW AVAILABLE HAS LED VIRTUALLY EVERY OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRY TO ACT. WHEN OUR HEALTH, WHEN THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN IS AT STAKE, WHEN SO MUCH EVIDENCE POINTS TO THE DANGERS OF LEAD, THE MASS OF PROOF AGAINST ACTING WEIGHS VERY HEAVILY AGAINST THOSE ADVOCATING A "DO NOTHING" APPROACH.

I THINK MOST OF US CAN AGREE WE MUST ACT. LET US GET ON WITH MORE RESEARCH IF NECESSARY, BUT MEANWHILE, IF ANY REASONABLE AND PRACTICABLE MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION WHILE WE'RE WAITING FOR ALL FACTS TO COME IN, LET US FOR GOODNESS SAKE TAKE THEM. THAT'S BROADLY MY APPROACH.

AMONG THE EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION I READ IN REACHING MY DECISION WAS YOUR ASSOCIATION'S CONCISE AND INFORMATIVE BRIEF ON THE URGENT NEED TO REDUCE AND ULTIMATELY ELIMINATE THE MENACE TO THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN CAUSED BY ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION FROM LEADED GASOLINE. YOUR SUBMISSION WAS TIMELY AND I WAS GLAD TO HAVE IT ON HAND BEFORE MY MEETING WITH THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY PEOPLE.

THIS IS NOT AN OCCASION FOR HEAVY TECHNICAL JARGON AND STATISTICS: MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN GIVING A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION TO THIS LEAD POISONING QUESTION AND ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE DATA. BUT OF ALL THE TABLES AND GRAPHS I'VE LOOKED AT LATELY, THE ONE THAT DISTURBED ME THE MOST IS THE ONE HEADED MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE LEAD CONTENT IN LEADED GASOLINE. THIS SHOWS CANADA, AMONG FIFTEEN NATIONS SURVEYED, WITH THE THIRD HIGHEST MAXIMUM, EXCEEDED ONLY BY NEW ZEALAND AND GREECE.

I ASK YOU, DOES IT MAKE SENSE FOR A COUNTRY LIKE CANADA TO BE SO FAR BEHIND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE LEVEL OF CONTROL OR TOLERANCE OF THE USE OF LEAD IN GASOLINE? IS IT BECAUSE WE DON'T REALLY APPRECIATE ITS SIGNIFICANCE? DOES IT MEAN THAT THOUGH WE KNOW, WE REALLY DON'T CARE?

DO WE CONSIDER CANADIAN CHILDREN TO BE LESS SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE HEALTH THREAT POSED BY LEAD EMISSION THAN CHILDREN IN, SAY, EUROPE, JAPAN, OR THE UNITED STATES? WHEN ONE TRIES TO ANSWER THOSE RHETORICAL QUESTIONS THE NEED FOR ACTING BECOMES CLEAR.

UNSURPRISINGLY, MY ANNOUNCEMENT AND THE PRESS REPORTS OF MY SPEECH TO THE PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION PEOPLE DREW A MIXED RESPONSE. I HAVE RECEIVED A NUMBER OF LETTERS DEALING WITH THE LIKELY EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL TO LIMIT THE USE OF LEADED GASOLINE. ONE MAN SAID HE DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT CARS DESIGNED TO RUN ON LEADED GASOLINE ARE POLLUTING THE ATMOSPHERE; AN OTHER MAN THOUGHT I'D BE BETTER OCCUPIED DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE "RIP-OFF" IN THE PRICE SPREAD BETWEEN LEADED AND UNLEADED GASOLINE. THAT ARGUMENT DOES ATTRACT MY ATTENTION - BUT THEN I NOTICED HE DIDN'T LIVE IN MY CONSTITUENCY OF ST. PAUL'S.

ANOTHER MAN WHO OWNS A SMALL BRITISH CAR ASKED ME IF I WAS PREPARED TO PAY FOR THE DAMAGE TO ITS ENGINE IF HE HAD TO START USING LEAD-FREE GASOLINE WHEN HIS OWNER'S MANUAL WARNS AGAINST THIS. HE ENDED HIS LETTER BY SAYING IN EFFECT THAT I'D BETTER FORGET IT OR HE'D NOT BE VOTING LIBERAL IN THE NEXT ELECTION. ONE WRITER MADE A GOOD POINT, I THOUGHT, IN NOTING THAT CANADA CAN'T HOPE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING ACID RAIN POLLUTION WHEN OUR LEAD EMISSIONS REGULATIONS ARE SO MUCH LESS STRINGENT THAN THOSE OF OUR SOUTHERN NEIGHBOUR.

I WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO GET A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ONE OF THE LEADING PETROLEUM PRODUCTS COMPANIES IN CANADA, EXPRESSING BROAD SUPPORT FOR MY RECENT STATEMENTS ON LEADED GASOLINE. WHILE HE EXPRESSED SOME DOUBT THAT THERE IS YET SUFFICIENT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO PROVE THAT CANADIANS ARE BEING EXPOSED TO A SIGNIFICANT HEALTH RISK, HE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVES IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO LOWER THE LEAD CONTENT STANDARD AT THIS TIME; PERHAPS TO ABOUT HALF THE PRESENT 3.5 GRAMS PER GALLON LEVEL. AS TO THE COST TO THE INDUSTRY AND THE CONSUMER OF TOTALLY ELIMINATING LEADED GASOLINE, HE FELT THE ESTIMATES GIVEN IN OUR STUDIES ERRED ON THE LOW SIDE.

AS I SAID, I WAS GLAD TO GET THIS LETTER, DESPITE THE DISAGREEMENT IT EXPRESSED ON CERTAIN POINTS, BECAUSE IT SHOWED ME THAT THE INDUSTRY MOST AFFECTED BY WHAT WE WANT TO DO IS NOT OBLIVIOUS TO THE PROBLEM AND THE NEED TO FIND A SOLUTION TO IT; AND IT SHOWED THE INDUSTRY IS READY TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE CONSULTATIONS WHICH WILL BE CARRIED OUT BEFORE A DECISION IS TAKEN ON WHAT REGULATORY CHANGES TO PROPOSE TO CABINET.

DURING THOSE CONSULTATIONS, I SHALL, OF COURSE, BE LOOKING CLOSELY AT THE COSTS INVOLVED, WHICH, AS I MENTIONED, THE INDUSTRY CONSIDERS WOULD BE MUCH HIGHER THAN OUR DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS INDICATE. AND I WOULD EXPECT THAT IN PREPARATION FOR OUR DISCUSSIONS, THE PETROLEUM COMPANIES WILL HAVE CAREFULLY REVIEWED AND FIRMED UP EARLY COST ESTIMATES. IN THE END, WE MAY NOT BE QUITE AS FAR APART ON THE QUESTION OF COST AS WE NOW APPEAR TO BE.

OF COURSE, THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY OF APPROACHING A SOLUTION, AND I HAVE LOOKED AT SEVERAL. ONE IS TO LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT WITHIN A FEW YEARS, SAY, BY THE END OF THIS DECADE, MOST VEHICLES WILL BE USING LEAD-FREE GASOLINE ANYWAY AND THE PROBLEM OF LEAD EMISSIONS WILL HAVE DISAPPEARED.

I DON'T THINK THAT IS AN ACCEPTABLE OPTION; A LOT OF DAMAGE TO THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN COULD TAKE PLACE WHILE WE'RE WAITING FOR CAR MANUFACTURERS TO STOP MAKING LEAD-TOLERANT VEHICLES, WHATEVER THE AUTOMOBILE MAKERS' TRENDS MAY SHOW AT THE MOMENT.

THERE HAS BEEN SOME TALK BY THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS ABOUT REPLACING MUFFLER SYSTEMS BY A DEVICE CALLED A "LEAD TRAP" WHICH, IT IS CLAIMED, WILL CONTROL LEAD EMISSIONS. ONE OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF ENGINEERING STUDIES DONE FOR ENVIRONMENT CANADA WAS THAT THE LEAD TRAP CONTROL SYSTEM IS NOT DESIRABLE FOR SEVERAL REASONS, INCLUDING THE TIME AND COST REQUIRED TO GET A LEAD TRAP PROGRAM ADOPTED AND OPERATING.

ON BALANCE, AFTER CONSIDERING ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR DEALING WITH THIS SERIOUS AND URGENT PROBLEM, I CONCLUDED THAT THE BEST INSTRUMENT AT HAND IS THE REGULATORY PROVISIONS OF THE CLEAN AIR ACT WHICH CAN PRESCRIBE THE LEVEL OF LEAD CONTAINED IN GASOLINE.

I HAVE ANNOUNCED A SIXTY-DAY CONSULTATION PERIOD TO ALLOW THOSE WISHING TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO. I SHALL CONTINUE MY EFFORTS TO DISPEL WHATEVER PUBLIC SKEPTICISM THERE MAY BE ABOUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE DANGERS FROM LEAD EMISSIONS, AND TO CONVINCE CAR OWNERS THAT, ON BALANCE, IT IS LESS COSTLY TO USE LEAD-FREE GASOLINE-- GIVEN THAT THE DIFFERENCE IN COST BETWEEN LEADED AND LEAD-FREE GASOLINE IS MORE THAN OFFSET BY SAVINGS ON SUCH MAINTENANCE COSTS AS SPARK PLUGS AND EXHAUST SYSTEM REPLACEMENTS, AND BECAUSE OF LESS FREQUENT TUNE-UPS AND OIL CHANGES.

WE MUST ALL DO MORE TO HEIGHTEN PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS IN LEAD EMISSIONS, AND TO CLEAR AWAY SOME OF THE MISCONCEPTIONS: THAT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AS THE CONSULTATION PROCESS TAKES PLACE.

I TOLD THE PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION I HOPED ITS MEMBERS WOULD TAKE UP MY INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PUBLIC DISCUSSION, TO HELP GET ALL THE FACTS CONCERNING THIS ISSUE OUT ON THE TABLE AND MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US IN GOVERNMENT TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE CONTROL OF LEAD ADDITIVES.

I HOPE, TOO, THAT YOUR ASSOCIATION WILL PLAY AN ACTIVE PART IN THIS DIALOGUE. NO ORGANIZATION HAS A STRONGER INTEREST IN SEEING THE NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE ACTION TAKEN TO REDUCE THIS INSIDIOUS DANGER TO THE HEALTH OF CANADIAN CHILDREN. I COUNT ON YOUR HELP TO ENSURE THEM THE RIGHT TO LIVE AND GROW IN AN ATMOSPHERE THAT IS FREE OF AN IMPURITY THAT CAN MAKE THEM SICK AND ONE THAT CAN BE REMOVED WITHOUT A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE OR EXPENSE. WE MUST ALL PUT OUR HEARTS AND WILLS TO WORK, AND ACT TO MAKE SURE THAT HAPPENS.



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Speech Discours

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS

BY THE HONOURABLE JOHN ROBERTS,
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT,

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA,

TO THE ROTARY CLUB, in COLUMBUS, OHIO,

APRIL 11, 1983

Check against delivery



I WANT TO THANK THE ROTARY CLUB FOR INVITING ME TO COLUMBUS TODAY TO TALK ABOUT DEVELOPMENT, THE ENVIRONMENT AND ACID RAIN. I CAN THINK OF NO MORE SUITABLE SETTING TO ADDRESS THOSE TOPICS AND ESPECIALLY THEIR INTERRELATIONSHIPS.

THE WAY IN WHICH WE APPROACH DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY HAS CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE LAST DECADE. WE HAVE LEARNED MUCH OF WHAT WE KNOW TODAY THROUGH OUR PAST EXPERIENCE. I WANT TO ELABORATE NOW ON JUST HOW THIS EXPERIENCE SHOULD AFFECT THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT THE ACID RAIN PROBLEM.

WHEN WE LOOK BEYOND IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ISSUES AND ADDRESS THEIR UNDERLYING CAUSES, WE BEGIN TO SEE THE COMPLEXITIES IN MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENVIRONMENT. OUR PRESENT COMMITMENT TO SOUND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT EMERGED AS PEOPLE BEGAN TO RECOGNIZE THAT A DEGRADED ENVIRONMENT IS A MEASURE OF RESOURCE MISUSE. ONE OF THE KEY LESSONS OF THE SEVENTIES WAS THE REALIZATION THAT THE HEALTH OF THE ENVIRONMENT IS NOT AT THE MARGIN...IS NOT AN AFTERTHOUGHT...BUT IS AT THE HEART OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. WHEREAS WE ONCE CONTEMPLATED DEVELOPMENT IN TERMS OF "GROWTH" VERSUS "NO GROWTH", WE NOW TALK ABOUT HOW TO ACHIEVE "SUSTAINABLE GROWTH" WHICH IS FAR MORE REALISTIC. THE MAINTENANCE OF THE QUALITY OF OUR WATER, OUR AIR AND OUR SOIL IS ESSENTIAL. AS ESSENTIAL TO GROWTH AS DEVELOPMENT ITSELF.

I DON'T PRETEND IT WILL BE EASY. ALL OF US - POLITICIANS, INDUSTRY, LABOUR - WILL ALL HAVE TO MAKE HARD CHOICES. CHOICES NOT ONLY ABOUT THE DEMANDS ON OUR RESOURCES BUT ABOUT HOW THE RESOURCES WILL BE USED.

CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF COOPERATION ON TRANSBOUNDARY ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. OUR RECORD IS GREATLY ENVIED. THIS ENVIED RECORD OF GOOD WILL AND PRAGMATISM SHOULD ENABLE US TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH ACID RAIN.

ACID RAIN IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASE OF SULPHUR DIOXIDE AND NITROGEN OXIDES INTO THE ATMOSPHERE. THE CHIEF SOURCES OF THESE EMISSIONS ARE THERMAL GENERATING PLANTS AND NON-FERROUS SMELTERS. THESE EMISSIONS GO FAR ALOFT, UNDERGO COMPLICATED CHEMICAL CHANGES AND COME DOWN MANY DAYS LATER AND HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY IN HIGHLY ACIDIC FORMS.

THE EFFECTS OF ACID RAIN ARE BECOMING UBIQUITOUS. THERE ARE LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF LAKES IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES THAT HAVE BEEN RENDERED SO ACIDIC THAT THEY ARE BIOLOGICALLY DEFUNCT ... THEY CAN NO LONGER SUPPORT NORMAL AQUATIC LIFE, INCLUDING FISH. MORE IMPORTANT ARE THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LAKES IN EASTERN NORTH AMERICA WHICH FACE A SIMILAR FATE BECAUSE THEY HAVE LITTLE RESISTANCE TO ACIDIFICATION. IF WE CONTINUE TO DUMP ACID INTO THESE VULNERABLE LAKES, THEY TOO WILL BECOME DEFUNCT.

ACID RAIN HAS OTHER EFFECTS. THE INCREASED ACIDITY OF WATER CAN CAUSE THE MOBILIZATION OF TOXIC METALS SUCH AS ALUMINUM AND MERCURY. ACID RAIN CAN INCREASE THE ACIDITY OF SOIL CAUSING ACCELERATED LOSS OF USEFUL NUTRIENTS AND TOXIC LEVELS OF ALUMINUM.

ACID RAIN IS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TRANSBOUNDARY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. IT AFFECTS PEOPLE IN BOTH COUNTRIES FAR FROM THE BORDER. IT POTENTIALLY AFFECTS LARGE REGIONS. ITS CAUSES ARE MORE NUMEROUS AND MORE DISPERSED. THE ECONOMIC COSTS OF EFFECTIVE CORRECTIVE

ACTION ARE GREATER: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS OF INACTION ARE ALSO FAR GREATER. WE KNOW THIS PROBLEM CANNOT BE SOLVED OVERNIGHT. WE KNOW IT WILL BE EXPENSIVE. WE KNOW THE POLITICS OF ACTION WILL BE COMPLEX. BUT WE WANT A START TO BE MADE NOW TO BRING IT UNDER CONTROL. A START TO REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF ACID RAIN.

WHY?

SOME HAVE SAID THERE ARE TWO BASIC REASONS: GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMICS. THE CANADIAN ECONOMY IS DEPENDENT ON OUR NATURAL RESOURCE BASE. THIS NATURAL RESOURCE BASE IS THREATENED BY ACID RAIN. THE GROSS ECONOMIC ACTIVITY GENERATED BY SPORTS FISHING IN EASTERN CANADA EXCEEDS ONE BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR. TOURISM REVENUES ARE MORE THAN TEN BILLION AND FORESTRY PRODUCES MORE THAN 15 BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR. ALTOGETHER, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION (ABOUT EIGHT PERCENT) OF OUR GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT...AT RISK BECAUSE OF ACID RAIN.

A LARGE PROPORTION OF CANADIANS LIVE EITHER WITHIN OR VERY CLOSE TO AREAS WHERE ACID RAIN IS A REAL ISSUE. A LOT OF CANADIANS THEREFORE MAKE A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE HARM THAT ACID RAIN CAN DO.

WHAT I FIND BEWILDERING IS THAT CANADIANS SHOULD BE THOUGHT TO BE ALONE IN THIS CONCERN. THE UNITED STATES HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN A LEADER IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION. IN ADDITION, SENATOR MITCHELL TOLD THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES LAST AUGUST THAT "...THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ACID PRECIPITATION ON EXISTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE EAST IS FIVE BILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY. IT IS ALSO ESTIMATED, THAT DAMAGE TO CROPS AND FISHERIES FROM ACID PRECIPITATION MAY TOTAL FROM 15 TO 25 BILLION DOLLARS BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY."

WE ALL RECOGNIZE THERE IS CONFLICT ON THIS ISSUE. TWO FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS ARE RAISED, AROUND WHICH THERE MAY APPEAR TO BE OPPOSING VIEWS.

THE FIRST IS: HOW SEVERE A CASE OF ACID INDIGESTION DOES THE ENVIRONMENT HAVE? AND, SECOND, WHAT REMEDIES ARE WARRANTED?

SCIENTISTS IN BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SAY THAT DAMAGE OCCURS IN VULNERABLE AREAS WHEN ACID DEPOSITION EXCEEDS 18 POUNDS PER ACRE PER YEAR. MORE THAN 1 MILLION SQUARE MILES OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA IS CURRENTLY RECEIVING ACID FALLOUT ABOUT THIS LEVEL. THE REMEDY IS TO REDUCE THE FALLOUT TO LESS THAN 18 POUNDS PER ACRE.

IF EVERYONE WOULD STEP BACK AND EXAMINE THE FACTS CAREFULLY, THEY WOULD SEE THERE IS NOTHING IN THE REMEDY THAT SHOULD PIT ONE GROUP AGAINST ANOTHER. THOSE WHO FAVOUR CONTROL OF ACID-CAUSING EMISSIONS DO NOT ADVOCATE CLOSING COAL MINES OR COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS. THE REMEDY DOES NOT PIT THE ENVIRONMENT AGAINST JOBS. IT IS THE LONG-TERM PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND JOBS. THE TWO ARE NOT INCOMPATIBLE AND INDEED ARE LINKED.

CANADIANS AREN'T ASKING AMERICANS TO DO ANYTHING THAT WE AREN'T WILLING TO DO OURSELVES. WE HAVE DETERMINED AND AGREED TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVE - A TARGET LOADING FOR SULPHATE DEPOSITION, THAT WOULD PROTECT MODERATELY SENSITIVE LAKES AND STREAMS FROM ACIDIFICATION. WE WANT YOU TO AGREE TO THAT ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVE. WE WILL EACH HAVE TO TAKE DIFFERENT ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE IT, AND THE DESIGN OF THESE ACTIONS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES. WE HAVE COMMITTED OURSELVES TO A 50 PERCENT REDUCTION OF SO₂ EMISSIONS EAST OF THE SASKATCHEWAN/MANITOBA BORDER BY THE YEAR 1990 CONTINGENT ON PARALLEL ACTION IN YOUR COUNTRY EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

WE DID NOT PULL THE 50 PERCENT FIGURE OUT OF A HAT. WORKING BACK FROM 18 LB/ACRE/YEAR THAT I MENTIONED EARLIER, WE CALCULATE THAT A 50 PERCENT REDUCTION IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES WOULD PROTECT THE VAST MAJORITY OF MODERATELY SENSITIVE AREAS IN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

WE IN CANADA HAVE ALREADY INITIATED A 25 PERCENT CUTBACK IN OUR SO₂ EMISSIONS. WE ARE PREPARED TO DOUBLE THAT EFFORT. THE ACTIONS WE ARE TAKING WILL DIFFER TECHNICALLY FROM THOSE THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN IN THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE OF THE OVERWHELMING DIFFERENCES IN THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS EMISSION SOURCES. FOR EXAMPLE, ELECTRIC UTILITIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF ALL SO₂ EMISSIONS IN THE UNITED STATES. IN CANADA UTILITIES REPRESENT LESS THAN 15 PERCENT OF OUR TOTAL SO₂ EMISSIONS. PROJECTIONS OF LOAD GROWTH FOR MOST OF OUR EASTERN UTILITIES INDICATE THAT THEIR COAL-FIRED CAPACITY WILL BE USED MORE FOR PEAK LOADS RATHER THAN BASE LOADS. THEY ARE THEREFORE TENDING TO FIND THAT OPERATIONAL CHANGES SUCH AS INCREASED USE OF LOW SULPHUR AND WASHED COALS ARE LIKELY TO BE LESS EXPENSIVE THAN CAPITAL EXPENDITURES. SCRUBBERS WILL BE NECESSARY AND COST-EFFECTIVE FOR CANADIAN UTILITIES ONLY IF LONG-TERM NEEDS CALL FOR INCREASED USE OF COAL-FIRED CAPACITY TO MEET BASE LOAD REQUIREMENTS.

CANADIAN ACTION ALONE WILL SOLVE NEITHER YOUR PROBLEM NOR OURS COMPLETELY. UP TO ONE QUARTER OF THE ACID RAIN FALLING IN SOME PARTS OF NEW ENGLAND ORIGINATES IN CANADA. BUT I MUST MAKE THE POINT THAT EVEN IF WE COULD MAGICALLY CUT OUR EMISSIONS TO ZERO, YOU WOULD STILL HAVE AN ACID RAIN PROBLEM HERE.

NUTRIENTS WOULD STILL BE LEACHED FROM YOUR SOIL, THE LOSS OF WHICH WOULD CONTINUE TO THREATEN YOUR FORESTS AND POSSIBLY AGRICULTURE. YOUR LAKES AND STREAMS WOULD STILL BE DYING, YOUR TROUT AND OTHER FISH STILL BE DISAPPEARING. WE TOO WOULD STILL HAVE A PROBLEM IN CANADA BECAUSE AT LEAST HALF OF OUR ACID RAIN COMES FROM THE UNITED STATES.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE WAY U.S. AND CANADIAN CLEAN AIR LAWS ACTUALLY WORK SHOWS THAT THEY ARE ROUGHLY COMPARABLE. IN ITS APPLICATION, CANADIAN LAWS ARE IN SOME INSTANCES MORE STRINGENT THAN U.S. LAW AND IN OTHERS LESS SO. MORE TO THE POINT, THERE ARE NO "NON-ATTAINMENT" AREAS FOR SO₂ IN CANADA AND WE HAVE BEGUN TO DEAL WITH OUR MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO ACID RAIN.

DESPITE CLAIMS TO THE CONTRARY, WE ARE DOING OUR SHARE AND WE ARE PREPARED TO DO MORE. WE HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO ACT; IT'S NOT A MATTER OF SCIENCE ANY LONGER, IT'S A MATTER OF POLITICAL WILL. WE HAVE REACHED THE POINT WHERE A DECISION TO ONLY DO MORE RESEARCH IS, IN FACT, A DECISION TO DO NOTHING. I HAVE NEVER CONTEMPLATED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC KNOWS THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE ACID RAIN PROBLEM AND HAS MADE SUCH A DECISION.

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Speech Discours

SPEECH NOTES FOR
THE HONOURABLE JOHN ROBERTS
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
OPERATION CLEAN-NIAGARA BENEFIT
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, ONTARIO

JUNE 6, 1983



I am glad to be here in the Niagara area during Canadian Environment Week. These are exciting, crucial days in the battle to preserve and improve the quality of Great Lakes Water, and it is especially appropriate that I am opening Environment Week activities here. Actually, the term Environment Week is a bit of a Misnomer. Certainly, it is a time of special awareness, a time for drawing attention to environmental issues but we all know that we live in the environment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year. And our concern, our vigilance, cannot be a one week special - it must be maintained continually.

I know that this is precisely what Operation Clean Niagara does. It is encouraging to have such committed allies for environmental protection in the Great Lakes community. That Great Lakes community includes people from Toronto, Sault Ste-Marie, Kingston, Buffalo, and Detroit, as well as you here in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Americans and Canadians, we are all "Great Lakers", part of a community of 37 million people in the Great Lakes Basin, 20 million of whom draw their drinking water from the Lakes.

The community of Great Lakers is a troubled one nowadays, because the same lakes that provide the drinking water for our society of 20 million have also served as a sink for our wastes. In the sixties, the lakes were endangered by accelerated eutrophication caused by phosphorus pollution from untreated sewage wastes. Just as we seem to have placed that problem under good control, we find ourselves face to face with another menace: the threat of hazardous substances and toxic chemicals.

The litany has become drearily familiar: lead and mercury; dioxin, PCBs, DDT, toxaphene and a host of other substances. The evidence is overwhelming; our Great Lakes ecosystem is not in balance.

The industrial processes which have given us economic growth and material advantage have left behind a heritage of environmental danger and disquiet. No doubt there are individual polluters - culprits if you must - at whom one may point. But essentially that is a problem created by our collective past lifestyles. The Great Lakes community is suffering from a problem of its own making. We as a community have caused it; we as a community must pitch in and solve it.

The community that must act is made up of all Great Lakers: Americans and Canadians, the public and private sectors, and environmental groups such as Operation Clean-Niagara and Pollution Probe. The eleven federal, state and provincial jurisdictions in our Great Lakes community will have to work more closely together than they have ever done before.

We need to adopt a comprehensive ecosystem approach, because it is clear that when faced by problems such as the threat of toxics, a piecemeal approach to the environment simply won't work. The ecosystem concept is not a magical panacea. Simply stated, it is a way of thinking which broadens our understanding of how we and our environment interact. It can serve as a basis for designing a broad program that will take into account the complex interrelationships of water, land, air and biota, including humans, in the Great Lakes Basin. To work effectively the ecosystem approach must be supported by specific programs and measures taken by all the jurisdictions around the Lakes.

Unfortunately, with respect to toxic chemicals there seems to be no clear consensus on the best course of action. In its 1982 report, the International Joint Commission said "there is no agreement among agencies, either between or in some cases within (emphasis added) jurisdictions, concerning appropriate measures to be taken".

The IJC concluded that an important factor holding back the preservation and restoration of the lakes is the lack of an overall strategy for toxic substance control activities.

I believe such a strategy must take strong action in three areas: It must be remedial, it must be preventative, and it must be long term.

The need for remedial action is obvious. If harmful substances are present in our ecosystem, we must neutralize or remove them. There are a variety of remedial measures at our disposal: restorative measures, treatment techniques, the "technological fix". These are necessary, because pollutants are already in the environment. But simply because countermeasures are technically feasible, we should not let them lull us into a false sense of security.

Treatment technology was a good solution to the problem of household wastes, because the pollutants in municipal sewage were largely degradable, and the end products were innocuous compounds. Neither of these factors apply to toxics, which pose problems of an entirely different order of magnitude. They can be persistent, they can accumulate in plant and animal tissues (bio-accumulate), and they can combine and recombine to form totally new substances. Restorative measures can be difficult and expensive. Sometimes, the only real remedy is the passage of time and the self-healing ability of nature. As events on the Niagara River are once again proving, it is cheaper and more practical to prevent an ecological catastrophe than it is to clean one up after the fact. When it is necessary to take remedial action, however, we must do so.

Prevention is preferable by far. But even here, we are faced with a totally new set of pollution problems. Even bans on toxic substances are sometimes not enough to prevent contamination.

Toxaphene was used as a pesticide and herbicide in California, the Dakotas and the American South. It has never been produced or used for those purposes in any significant way in the Great Lakes Basin, and it is now banned. Yet it has been detected in Lake Superior lake trout. It was transported through the atmosphere as airborne pollution. The same with DDT, banned in North America for over a decade. Amounts of DDT in the Great Lakes have declined to so-called "safe" levels, but contamination continues, via the atmosphere, from countries elsewhere in the world where DDT is still used.

Prevention must mean a variety of sophisticated measures. Plants can be designed as closed loop systems or twinned, so that one factory's wastes can become the raw material of another. New chemicals should be thoroughly tested before they come on the market, their characteristics noted, and tracked from cradle to grave. Recycling and re-use must become the bywords of industry and society, and, in those cases where wastes must absolutely be disposed of, incineration or landfill activities carried out with the utmost security.

In the long term, we must arrive at a basic understanding of the links among the natural environment, economic development, lifestyle and the institutional values of society. In a sense, environmental problems are rooted in the very cultural traditions of our society and the institutions that serve us.

Environmental problems are societal problems in that they are often caused by our society's seemingly insatiable demand for goods and services. If we are to preserve our environment for future generations, we must find some way of reconciling these conflicting elements. This is the true long term solution to our problems here in the Great Lakes Basin.

Still, we live in the present, and toxics are in our water supplies now. Health and Welfare Canada has drafted water quality guidelines with great care and caution, and municipal water supplies drawn from the Great Lakes are well within the guidelines. Let me stress this--within the framework of current scientific knowledge, neither the federal government nor the Province of Ontario has ever found any reason to believe that our water supplies are unsafe.

At the same time, we know that toxic substances are out there, even if they are present only in trace amounts. And it takes a long time and an enormous amount of money to do complete testing on a potentially hazardous substance. Water quality standards exist for only a fraction of the 2 000 potentially harmful substances that have been detected in the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem. These toxics can combine to form unknown substances, and because of bio-accumulation, even minute amounts can build up once they enter the food chain. These are areas of uncertainty - and there always will be. Scientists can never give absolute guarantee.

Increasingly we will have to deal with environmental problems on the basis of managing risk, of taking decisions with necessarily limited scientific understanding - limited because scientists never cease in improving and measuring our knowledge. Increasingly these environmental phenomena will be seen to be complex, not simple, and often international, not local, in scope. We must know how to manage our scientific knowledge, and how to manage our lack of knowledge - so that the call for more research, more information, more precision does not become in practice simply an excuse for not taking action. We must be able to judge when knowledge is sufficient when we know enough to act even though it might be possible to know even more. All these questions are raised in considering the challenge presented by toxic substances.

Jack Vallentyne is a federal government scientist and an environmentalist. In a recent article in the Globe he wrote:

Do I drink the water? Yes, at my own risk.
Do members of my family drink the water?
Yes, at their own risk.
Do I advise others to drink the water?
Yes, at their own risk.

We come down to a matter of risk. And since these substances can be, at some levels, toxic, common sense would dictate a need for caution and prudence.

The danger is that unless we take action, both remedial and preventative, and continue and increase our scientific efforts to improve our knowledge, the situation will deteriorate. We cannot act in ignorance. We cannot accept with equanimity the increasing presence of potentially toxic substances.

I don't want the odds to get any worse than they are at present. Therefore, I am proposing a course of action on two fronts.

First, even though the water of Lake Ontario meets all present health guidelines, there are still too many poorly understood factors. Because of the varying responsibilities among different government agencies which relate to drinking water, I propose to invite these agencies - Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Ontario Ministry of Health and the Regional Municipalities - National Health and Welfare to come together for a thorough discussion of the problem. The state of water quality in Lake Ontario would be reviewed and related to the latest scientific information on health guidelines and priority toxic substances and the existing water purification and treatment measures employed. Public participation would be invited both to reduce the public confusion over the conflicting points of view which are often apparent, and to encourage public debate on such issues as the benefits and costs to the tax-payer of alternative drinking water treatment technologies.

Currently, treatment of drinking water is a provincial and municipal matter, yet water quality guidelines are set by Health and Welfare Canada. Since the Great Lakes are international waters, Environment Canada has a strong mandate for their protection and management. At present, the province and the federal government work together to fulfill our Great Lakes responsibilities under the Canada-Ontario Agreement. This arrangement has worked well.

I propose that we build on this multi-level foundation by bringing in the municipalities which bear the local responsibility for water treatment and the provision of good drinking water to their citizens. It is with this intent in mind that I will be taking steps to elicit the support of those relevant government agencies which would be involved. I believe we should pool our resources, our knowledge and our expertise. Let us have genuine consultation with the public and with environmental groups. We are faced with one of the greatest environmental challenges in our history. Let us bring to bear on the problem the resources that are needed now, and that will be needed even more over the long term.

Second, we have to stop present contamination. I spoke earlier of the need for remedial and preventative action. We know that chemicals are leaching into the Great Lakes, and sometimes we know precisely where they are coming from.

I believe we need to undertake a thorough review of areas of concern in the Great Lakes where identified chemical sources exist and where remedial measures are in progress or are required to meet the stated objectives of the Boundary Waters Treaty and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The IJC reports annually on these areas of concern and some of them, the Niagara River for instance, are recognized as having problems which are not going to be resolved in the near future. Are the jurisdictions doing enough? Are they problems of a technical nature or are they problems relating to a lack of political will? I want to know and I have therefore asked my officials to provide a report - as detailed and precise as possible - to me on those areas where Great Lakes water quality objectives are being violated and what actions the responsible jurisdictions are taking to remedy these situations.

Of particular concern to me is the situation which presently exists in the Niagara River. My department has been actively involved since 1975 in defining the nature of pollution problems in the River. Annual baseline surveys of trace contaminants in the water, sediments and biota have been undertaken and numerous technical meetings have been held with U.S. agencies to analyze and review programs designed to reduce contaminant loadings to the Niagara River. In addition I have on a number of occasions communicated the Canadian concern for the pollution of this shared waterway to senior levels in the U.S. Government. The situation was raised most recently with Mr. Ruckelshaus the newly appointed U.S. EPA administrator. And yet the problems persist. We must eliminate leakage from major dump sites on the U.S. side of the Niagara River. This flow of contaminants is of concern to all members of the Great Lakes community, no matter where they live, no matter which side of the border they are on.

Our natural commitments are clear on the matter of pollution in the Great Lakes. The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 reads, "Boundary waters and waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other side".

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1978 pledges both countries to "virtually eliminate" the discharge of any or all toxic substances into the Great Lakes ecosystem. If we are to honour this commitment, all jurisdictions must identify action time-tables and milestones which will lead us toward the goal.

I hope that our American neighbors will get on with remedial actions while they can still do some good. Toxic runoff and leachates must be stopped before they get into the water supply. Liability and costs can be assigned after the necessary clean-ups are done. It's a matter of first things first; the urgency of the situation will not permit delays.

We all have a stake in Great Lakes water quality. The flow of any pollutants into the Great Lakes, at any location, is of concern to all Great Lakers. This is why my department encourages involvement of organizations such as Operation Clean-Niagara in seeking solutions to these problems. I would expect Americans to be equally interested in pollutants flowing the other way, as Vermonters are with the acid ?

Rain we export to them. Canadian health and safety is potentially at risk because of pollutants that are flowing into the Niagara River, literally off the walls of the Niagara Gorge.

Meanwhile, time is passing, and we see little improvement in the situation. I would urge all members of the Great Lakes community, on both sides of the border, to double and redouble their remedial and preventative efforts. As Minister of the Environment, I shall use every resource of my Department to urge all members of the Great Lakes community to behave with responsibility towards the ecosystem, to stop the flow of toxics, and to restore environmental quality.

We have had ten years of experience in battling Great Lakes pollution problems. While our success in some areas such as eutrophication has been considerable, we know we face a tough challenge with toxic chemical contamination. In these ten years our knowledge of the aquatic environment has grown dramatically. That knowledge of specific pollution problems, of the physical and chemical dynamics of the lakes, of the interaction of water, sediments, plant life, fish and wildlife of the Great Lakes leads to one basic conclusion. As Great Lakers we are inextricably part of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem. What we do on the shores of the lakes affects their waters. That fundamental conclusion must serve as a guidepost for our future water quality management activities. As individuals and corporate citizens of the Great Lakes community we must consciously reflect a common respect for the total Great Lakes system. As responsible governments, and in light of this magnificent natural resource in which we hold privileged membership, our nations must take seriously the imperatives of the ecosystem and endeavour to cooperate in our planning and management activities. To do less is to admit a collective stupidity we can ill afford. The Great Lakes Basin is our home and will be our grandchildren's home. Let us begin to act accordingly.

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Speech Discours

OPENING ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE JOHN ROBERTS
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
ACID RAIN AND FOREST RESOURCES
CONFERENCE
QUEBEC CITY
14 JUNE 1983



IT IS A PLEASURE TO WELCOME TO THIS CONFERENCE ON ACID RAIN AND FORESTRY SO MANY DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES. I WISH TO EXTEND A PARTICULARLY WARM CANADIAN WELCOME TO THOSE OF YOU WHO COME FROM THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE AND WHO MAY BE VISITING THIS HISTORIC CITY FOR THE FIRST TIME.

IF YOU KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT CANADA'S DEVELOPMENT YOU MAY REALIZE THAT QUEBEC IS AN ESPECIALLY APPROPRIATE LOCATION FOR THIS CONFERENCE. THE WORD "QUEBEC" IS OF ALGONQUIN INDIAN ORIGIN AND MEANS "A NARROWING OF THE RIVER". FOR CLOSE TO FOUR HUNDRED YEARS, MANY CHAPTERS OF CANADA'S COLORFUL HISTORY WERE PLAYED OUT ON THE RIVERS AND IN THE FORESTS OF THIS PROVINCE IN WHICH LUMBERING FORMED THE MAINSTAY OF THE ECONOMY. AND, ALTHOUGH THE FOCUS OF QUEBEC'S FOREST INDUSTRIES HAS CHANGED OVER THE CENTURIES, FIRST FROM EXPORTING SQUARED TIMBER TO PRODUCING SAWN LUMBER, THEN FROM SAWN LUMBER TO PULPWOOD, THE RESOURCE FROM WHICH IT ALL CAME HAS REMAINED AS IMPORTANT TO CANADA TODAY AS IT WAS FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

TOGETHER, THE SIX PROVINCES THAT CONSTITUTE CANADA'S FORESTRY SECTOR PRODUCE \$23 BILLION WORTH OF SHIPMENTS ANNUALLY, WITH EXPORTS AMOUNTING TO \$13 BILLION PER YEAR. THAT REPRESENTS 16 PERCENT OF THIS COUNTRY'S TOTAL EXPORT. NO OTHER INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTES AS MUCH TO OUR BALANCE OF PAYMENTS. FORESTRY ALSO CONTRIBUTES SOME \$3 BILLION IN ANNUAL TAXES, AND DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, EMPLOYS ONE MILLION PERSONS, WHICH TRANSLATES TO ONE IN EVERY TEN JOBS.

IN ADDITION, OUR FORESTS PROVIDE THE SETTING FOR A MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR RECREATION AND TOURISM INDUSTRY. AND OF COURSE WE CANNOT OVERESTIMATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE OF THE FOREST COVER ITSELF: ITS ABILITY TO REGULATE THE FLOW OF MANY OF OUR RIVER SYSTEMS, THEREBY PRESERVING FISH HABITATS; ITS FUNCTION IN PREVENTING SOIL EROSION; ITS ROLE AS HOME TO A DIVERSIFIED RANGE OF WILDLIFE.

AS MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSERVING AND ENHANCING CANADA'S RENEWABLE RESOURCES AND PROMOTING THEIR WISE USE. TO ENSURE THAT THIS RESPONSIBILITY IS CARRIED OUT IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFIT, THE POLICIES THAT MY DEPARTMENT FOLLOWS ARE FORMULATED WITHIN THE CONCEPT OF "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT".

WHEN WE APPLY THIS CONCEPT TO FORESTRY PRACTICES, WE ARE FACED WITH A PROBLEM. FOR YEARS WE HAVE RELIED ON A WELL-ESTABLISHED FORMULA KNOWN AS "THE ANNUAL ALLOWABLE CUT" TO INCORPORATE THE PRINCIPLE OF SUSTAINABLE YIELD AND TO CALCULATE THE FREQUENCY OF HARVESTS. UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT THIS FORMULA IS ONLY AS DEPENDABLE AS THE DATA ON GROWTH RATES, INSECTS, DISEASE AND FIRE LOSS, REGENERATIVE ABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND SO FORTH THAT GO INTO MAKING UP THE FORMULA. HOWEVER, IN 1981, THE DOWNWARD REVISION OF THE ANNUAL ALLOWABLE CUT LEVELS WAS SO SUBSTANTIAL THAT PROVINCES HAVE EITHER ATTAINED OR EXCEEDED THE LIMITS, OR HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ATTAIN THEM BECAUSE FOREST

RESERVES WERE INACCESSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC REASONS. ALL OUR PROVINCES NOW FACE LOCAL SHORTAGES OF WOOD.

MY DEPARTMENT HAS NOW EMBARKED ON A STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN, IN COOPERATION WITH THE PROVINCES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE FOREST RESOURCE BASE.

TO BEGIN WITH, THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS (CCREM) HAS ENDORSED A FORTY PERCENT INCREASE IN HARVEST LEVEL BY THE YEAR 2000. THIS INCREASE, WHICH AMOUNTS TO 210 MILLION CUBIC METRES, IS EQUIVALENT TO AN ANNUAL AVERAGE INCREASE OF JUST 1.8 PERCENT CALCULATED FROM 1980. THIS INCREASE CLOSELY PARALLELS THE AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE OF 2.1 PERCENT THAT FAO HAS ESTIMATED WILL REPRESENT THE INCREASE IN GLOBAL DEMAND AND CONSUMPTION OF INDUSTRIAL ROUNDWOOD OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

WE PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH THIS INCREASE BY ENCOURAGING FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN TRADITIONAL ATTITUDES REGARDING FOREST EXPLOITATION.

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS SINCE CABINET APPROVED THE FOREST SECTOR STRATEGY FOR CANADA, FEDERAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR THE FOREST SECTOR INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE AREAS OF HUMAN RESOURCES, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, FOREST RENEWAL, JOB CREATION UNDER SECTION 38 OF THE U.I. ACT, ADMINISTRATION OF THE FOREST RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS (FORMERLY WITH DREE), AND FOREST FIRE SUPPRESSION.

THE 1982 FRAMEWORK FOR FOREST RENEWAL PAPER THAT I ISSUED, AND WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY ALL PROVINCIAL FORESTRY MINISTERS UNDER THE COUNCIL OF RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS, FORECAST THAT COMBINED INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT SPENDING WILL HAVE TO BE \$650 MILLION ANNUALLY WITHIN FIVE YEARS. THIS IS BASED PRIMARILY ON A PROGRAM OF REGULAR, SIZEABLE PROGRAM OF REGULAR, SIZEABLE INCREASES IN REPLANTING OF CURRENT CUTOVERS AND INCREASES IN SILVICULTURAL TREATMENTS. THE COMBINED SPENDING PROGRAM OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS AND INDUSTRY WOULD GROW FROM \$240 MILLION IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE FIVE-YEAR PROGRAM TO THE TARGET OF \$650 MILLION.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS MOVING INTO DIRECT SUPPORT OF FOREST RENEWAL. WE HAVE APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE TO SPEND A MINIMUM OF \$130 MILLION A YEAR BY 1987 FOR FOREST RENEWAL AND SILVICULTURE PRACTICES. THIS COMPARES WITH \$50 MILLION IN 1982.

THE FOREST STRATEGY IN 1981 OUTLINED THE NEED FOR A CONCERN FOR THE IMPROVED DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE FORESTRY FIELD. WE HAVE BROUGHT FORWARD AN INCREASE WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED IN THE SPRING OF 1982 OF OVER \$15 MILLION IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT.

WE INCREASED THE SUPPORT GOING TO FORESTRY SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY FROM JUST UNDER \$300,000, BY ADDING ANOTHER \$1 MILLION FOR THE YEAR 1982-83--IN SUPPORT OF THE FORESTRY FACULTIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK, THE UNIVERSITY OF LAVAL, THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, THE UNIVERSITY OF LAKEHEAD, THE UNIVERSITY OF EDMONTON AND AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. WE HAVE ADDED \$3.5 MILLION IN SUPPORT FOR FORESTRY SCHOOLS IN CONTRACT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, AND FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF 300 SUMMER STUDENTS IN 1983-84. SUPPORT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES WILL INCREASE TO \$6 MILLION IN EXPENDITURE IN 1985-86.

IN ORDER TO IMPROVE OUR RESEARCH CAPABILITY, WHICH WAS ANOTHER ASPECT WE FOCUSED ON IN THE DISCUSSION OF THE FOREST SECTOR STRATEGY, WE BROUGHT FORWARD FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR STRENGTHENING OUR EFFORTS. WE HAVE SIGNED RESEARCH AGREEMENTS WITH OVER HALF THE PROVINCES TO ENSURE THERE ARE NEITHER OVERLAPS NOR GAPS IN OUR MUTUAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES. BY THE END OF THIS YEAR WE EXPECT TO HAVE SIGNED RESEARCH AGREEMENTS WITH ALL TEN OF THE PROVINCES. WE HAVE INCREASED OUR EXPENDITURES ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CANADIAN FORESTRY SERVICE BY \$5.5 MILLION FOR THE YEAR 1983-1984.

ONE OF THE MAJOR WAYS IN WHICH WE HAVE RESPONDED TO THE FOREST CHALLENGE WAS OUR COMMITMENT IN SEPTEMBER, 1982 TO ENTER INTO ARRANGEMENTS WITH EACH OF THE PROVINCES IN SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO MEET THE REFORESTATION NEEDS OF THE CANADIAN INDUSTRY. OVER THE NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS WE INTEND TO SIGN A FOREST RENEWAL AGREEMENT WITH EACH PROVINCE, AS WE HAVE ALREADY WITH THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA. AN AGREEMENT WITH PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND IS READY TO BE SIGNED. WE WILL ASSIST AND ENCOURAGE THE PROVINCES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CO-OPERATE IN THE NEEDED OBJECTIVE OF REFORESTATION.

A FEW MOMENTS AGO I TOUCHED UPON JOB CREATION. UNDER THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE JOB CREATION PROGRAM WE HAVE ADDED SOMETHING LIKE \$35 MILLION FOR 1982-83 ALONE IN THE FOREST SECTOR OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURES TO ASSIST WITH EMPLOYMENT IN THE FOREST INDUSTRY. IT IS SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT BUT IT WILL HAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE LONGER TERM BY IMPROVING CANADA'S WOOD SUPPLY. OBVIOUSLY THAT \$35 MILLION IS IN ADDITION TO THE \$170 MILLION WHICH COMES FROM UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION. TO DATE, IF MEMORY SERVES ME WELL, SOMETHING LIKE 11,000 TO 12,000 POSITIONS HAVE BEEN CREATED IN THE FOREST INDUSTRY AS A RESULT OF THAT PROGRAM.

WE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED A VERY CONSIDERABLE EXPANSION OF OUR FUNDING OF CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY. WE MADE THE COMMITMENT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE MARITIME FOREST RESEARCH CENTRE IN THE MARITIME FOREST COMPLEX IN NEW BRUNSWICK. WE ARE COMMITTED TO CONSIDERABLY

EXPANDING OUR RESEARCH FACILITIES IN STE. FOY, IN SAULT STE. MARIE, AND IN VICTORIA.

OF COURSE, IT IS NOT SATISFACTORY TO DO RESEARCH AND UNDERTAKE REFORESTATION WITHOUT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEED TO PROTECT THE FOREST RESOURCE. THAT IS WHY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORT THE ACQUISITION OF SUPPLEMENTARY WATER BOMBER FLEETS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO PROVIDE A MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO FOREST PROTECTION NEEDS IN CANADA. THIS IS AN INITIATIVE WE TOOK AS A RESPONSE TO THE REQUESTS FLOWING TO US FROM PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS.

HOWEVER WE MUST ALSO EMPHASIZE ISSUES THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR FORESTRY OBJECTIVES. THESE INCLUDE TOXIC CHEMICALS, ACID RAIN, ENERGY, THE LAND RESOURCE BASE AND CLIMATIC CHANGE.

AMONG THESE ISSUES, ACID RAIN PROBABLY POSES THE MOST IMMEDIATE EXTERNAL THREAT TO CANADA'S FORESTS. AS YOU ARE AWARE, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT BOTH WET AND DRY ACID DEPOSITION AFFECTS FOREST PRODUCTIVITY. FOUR IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL STUDIES SINCE 1978 HAVE UNANIMOUSLY CONCLUDED THAT ACID RAIN COULD SOONER OR LATER IRREVERSIBLY IMPOVERISH MANY FOREST SITES. SCIENTISTS ARE TELLING US THAT LARGE AMOUNTS OF ACID-FORMING EMISSIONS ARE GENERATED IN THE NORTH AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN CONTINENTS, AND THAT DOWNWIND FROM THEIR SOURCES ONE CAN MEASURE HIGH ACIDITY IN PRECIPITATION AND HIGH LEVEL OF DEPOSITION. THEY ARE POINTING OUT THAT ENORMOUS AREAS OF FOREST IN CANADA, THE UNITED STATES AND CENTRAL EUROPE ARE BEING SUBJECTED TO ACID DEPOSITION STRESS THAT IS QUITE RECENT. THEY ARE WARNING US THAT THERE IS INCREASING EVIDENCE THAT TREE GROWTH MAY BE BEING IMPAIRED THROUGH THE MULTIPLE EFFECTS OF ACID RAIN ACTING IN COMBINATION WITH OZONE AND SULPHUR DIOXIDE. A RECENT STUDY IN THE PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK HAS SHOWN THAT THE MORPHOLOGY OF SEEDLINGS CAN BE DAMAGED AT HIGHER PH LEVELS THAN WE PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

THERE'S ALSO PLENTY OF BAD NEWS ABOUT OUR WATER RESOURCES AS WELL. OUR OWN STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT 4,600 LAKES ARE DEAD -- MEANING THAT THEIR ACIDITY LEVEL IS TOO HIGH TO SUPPORT FISH LIFE. ANOTHER 12,000 ARE MOVING TOWARD THE SAME CONDITION. AT THE RATE WE ARE GOING, WE'LL SOON BE IN THE SAME POSITION AS SWEDEN, WITH ITS 20,000 DEAD LAKES, OR THE AMERICAN STATES EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI, WHERE, ACCORDING TO THE CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT, 18 PERCENT OF THE LAKES AND 21 PERCENT OF THE STREAM MILES IN THE AREA SHOW ACID RAIN DAMAGE. SOME OF THE BEST-DOCUMENTED ACID RAIN LOSSES TO SPORTFISHING STOCKS ARE AMERICAN LOSSES. THESE INCLUDE ELIMINATION OF ALL FISH IN 180 LAKES IN THE ADIRONDACK VACATION AREA OF UPSTATE NEW YORK.

THE TIME HAS COME TO STOP WRINGING OUR HANDS AS WE RECORD THE RELENTLESS TOTALS COMING IN: WE MUST ACT TO REDUCE ACID DEPOSITION AND POLLUTION LEVELS NOW, BEFORE THE DAMAGE BECOMES IRREVERSIBLE. IN FACT, IT IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE WAITING FOR. HASN'T RECENT ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY TAUGHT US ANYTHING? CAN WE REALLY HAVE FORGOTTEN ALREADY THE LESSONS OF SILENT SPRING, THE BUMPER STICKER'S SAYING "LAKE ERIE DIED FOR YOUR SINS" AND THE WHOLE ENVIRONMENTAL AWAKENING OF THE 1960s? EXPERIENCE TAUGHT US THEN THAT THE PRICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL NEGLECT MAY BE DEFERRED, BUT IT MUST BE PAID EVENTUALLY -- AND, LIKE OUR CREDIT CARD BILLS, THE LONGER WE WAIT, THE HIGHER THE PRICE GETS.

SO WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? SOME PEOPLE SAY WE NEED MORE DATA, THAT WE DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO ACT WISELY, THAT WE CANNOT APPLY WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR ABOUT DAMAGE TO OUR ECOSYSTEMS TO OTHERS WE HAVE NOT STUDIED. WHAT WE NEED, THEY SAY, IS MORE RESEARCH.

I AM CERTAINLY IN FAVOUR OF MORE RESEARCH. HOWEVER, I ALSO KNOW THAT WE LEARNED AN INVALUABLE LESSON IN THE EARLY 1970s. THOSE WERE THE YEARS IN WHICH WE KNEW THAT EUTROPHICATION WAS CHOKING LAKES ERIE AND ONTARIO, BUT WERE UNABLE TO PRECISELY PINPOINT THE CAUSE: WAS IT NITROGEN OR PHOSPHOROUS? SOME SCIENTISTS FELT WE REQUIRED A 75 PERCENT REDUCTION IN PHOSPHOROUS CONCENTRATION, OTHERS FELT 40 PERCENT WOULD DO IT, STILL OTHERS FELT MORE RESEARCH WAS NECESSARY. FINALLY, A POLITICAL DECISION WAS MADE TO BEGIN REDUCING PHOSPHOROUS DISCHARGES AT THE SOURCES. IN THE END, THE ACTIONS WILL REQUIRE SOME REVISION, BUT MEANWHILE, A COMMENDABLE AND EFFECTIVE START WAS MADE ON THE REHABILITATION PROCESS.

THAT PROCESS INVOLVED DEALING WITH AN ESCALATING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM ON THE BASIS OF MANAGING RISK, OF TAKING DECISIONS WITH NECESSARILY LIMITED SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING -- LIMITED IN THE SENSE THAT AT THE TIME THE DECISION MUST BE MADE, SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE WAS NOT YET COMPLETE AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PRODUCE FURTHER USEFUL DATA LATER.

IN MY OPINION, WE ARE NOW IN THE SAME POSITION WITH REGARD TO ACID RAIN. WE ARE READY TO DEAL WITH ACID RAIN ON THE BASIS OF MANAGING RISK, USING THE KNOWLEDGE WE HAVE SO FAR.

LET'S LOOK AT THE SITUATION MORE CLOSELY. WE KNOW THERE IS WIDESPREAD ACCEPTANCE OF A THRESHOLD DEPOSITION FIGURE THAT SEPARATES DAMAGED WATER BODIES FROM UNDAMAGED. MANY SCIENTISTS ARE CONFIDENT THAT THIS FIGURE COULD SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR AN ABATEMENT STRATEGY THAT WOULD LEAD TO THE REHABILITATION OF DAMAGED LAKES. IF WE CAN ACHIEVE 20 KG/HA/YEAR, THAT SHOULD GO A CONSIDERABLE WAY TOWARDS PROTECTING MODERATELY SENSITIVE LAKES AND STREAMS.

MAKING A START ON PROTECTING OUR FORESTS WON'T BE QUITE AS SIMPLE. SCIENTISTS DO NOT YET FEEL THEY CAN SUGGEST A TENTATIVE THRESHOLD DEPOSITION LEVEL. IF, AS MANY BELIEVE, OUR LAKES AND STREAMS ARE THE MOST SENSITIVE PART OF OUR ENVIRONMENT TO ACIDIFICATION, THE 20 KILOGRAM TARGET MAY PROTECT OUR FORESTS. IF WE FIND OUR FORESTS AND SOILS ARE MORE SENSITIVE THAN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS WE WILL HAVE TO REVISE OUR OBJECTIVE.

WE DO, HOWEVER, HAVE GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INITIAL COURSE OF ACTION. WITHIN THE LAST TWO MONTHS, THE CANADA/US WORKING GROUP SET UP TO STUDY ACID RAIN UNDER A MEMORANDUM OF INTENT BETWEEN THESE TWO COUNTRIES PUBLISHED A REPORT THAT CONTAINED SIX BASIC FINDINGS:

1. DAMAGE IS BEING DONE TO AQUATIC SYSTEMS IN BOTH COUNTRIES;
2. THIS DAMAGE IS BEING CAUSED BY SULPHUR EMISSIONS;
3. THE DEPOSITIONS AND DAMAGED ARE DOWNWIND OF MAJOR INDUSTRIAL SOURCES OF SO_2 ;
4. IN AREAS RECEIVING DEPOSITIONS OF 20 KILOGRAMS PER HECTARE PER YEAR OR MORE, YOU FIND DAMAGE. BELOW THAT LEVEL, YOU DON'T;
5. THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM IS TO CONTROL SO_2 EMISSIONS;
6. IF WE DON'T CONTROL SUCH EMISSIONS, THEY WILL INCREASE TO THE END OF THE CENTURY.

ON THE BASIS OF THIS REPORT AND OTHER EVIDENCE, WE HAVE MADE A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL TO THE UNITED STATES. THIS PROPOSAL RESTS ON TWO MAIN PREMISES:

FIRST, THAT WE NEED TO REDUCE SUPHATE DEPOSITION TO LESS THAN 20 KILOGRAMS PER HECTARE PER YEAR.

SECOND, COMPUTER MODELING HAS SHOWN THAT TO GET SULPHATE DEPOSITS DOWN TO 20 KILOGRAMS PER HECTARE ANNUALLY, WE NEED TO REDUCE EMISSIONS BY 50 PERCENT.

WE ARE SEEKING AGREEMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES ON TWO MAIN POINTS: THAT THE PREMISES I HAVE JUST OUTLINED ARE VALID; AND THAT WE JOIN HANDS IN A PROGRAM TO BRING EMISSIONS DOWN BY 50 PERCENT.

THIS APPROACH RESPECTS BOTH ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERATIVES. THE TARGET DATE OVER APPROXIMATELY THE NEXT DECADE GIVES INDUSTRY TIME TO ADAPT OR BENEFIT FROM CHEAPER ABATEMENT SYSTEMS THAT MAY BE DEVELOPED BY THEN. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, THIS IS A PLAN THAT FOCUSES ON RESULTS, RATHER THAN METHODS.

THE COST TO CANADA WOULD BE \$1 BILLION ANNUALLY. FOR AMERICANS, THE COSTS WOULD BE ABOUT \$2.5 TO \$4.5 BILLION ANNUALLY. IT IS CERTAINLY ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT REPEATED POLLS HAVE SHOWN CANADIANS GIVE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT TO CLEANING UP ACID RAIN.

WILL WE BE ABLE TO GET A JOINT PROGRAM UNDER WAY IN TIME? WHILE I CAN'T CLAIM THINGS ARE MOVING QUICKLY, THERE ARE SOME HOPEFUL SIGNS. ONE IS THE GROWING SENSE THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS AWAKENING TO THE ACID RAIN DANGER. ANOTHER IS THE FORTHCOMING APPROACH I OBSERVED IN THE NEW AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR, WILLIAM RUCKELSHAUS, DURING MY RECENT MEETING WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON.

MEANWHILE, IT'S UP TO THE FOREST SCIENTISTS TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF FINDING THE INFORMATION WE POLITICIANS MUST HAVE IF WE ARE TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT. YOU ARE THE AUTHORITIES WHO CAN TELL US WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO PROTECT THE FORESTS. YOU CAN PUT DIMENSIONS ON THE PROBLEM. YOU CAN GIVE US THE FIGURES FOR CEILING DEPOSITION LEVELS FOR DIFFERENT POLLUTANTS.

THE INCREASINGLY CHALLENGING PROBLEMS OF TODAY CALL FOR THE POOLING OF SCARCE EXPERTISE AND THE STIMULUS OF INTERNATIONAL CONTACT. CONFERENCES SUCH AS THIS ONE ARE IDEAL FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE KNOWLEDGE SHARED HERE, THE SPRINGBOARD FOR MORE EXPLORATIONS THAT YOUR DISCUSSIONS WILL PROVIDE, WILL LEAD TO FURTHER INFORMATION ON WHICH POLICY MAKERS CAN BASE THEIR DECISIONS.

I KNOW THAT YOU ARE AS COMMITTED AS I AM TO SOLVING THESE PROBLEMS. SEVERAL WEEKS AGO I HEARD GEORGE TOMLINSON FROM DOMTAR INC. GIVE AN ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE IN DETROIT. HE PRESENTED SOME ALARMING EVIDENCE ON THE EFFECTS OF ACID RAIN TO THE FORESTS IN WEST GERMANY. I KNOW THAT SOME OF THE GERMAN SCIENTISTS MR. TOMLINSON QUOTED IN HIS ADDRESS ARE HERE AT THIS CONFERENCE AND IT WILL BE INTERESTING FOR YOU TO LEARN FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE. I AM POSITIVE THAT, LIKE ME, YOU DON'T WANT THE FORESTS AND WATERS OF ALL OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES TO END UP IN THE SAME CONDITION AS THOSE OF WEST GERMANY, WHERE, RECENTLY RELEASED REPORTS CLAIM UP TO 50 PERCENT OF THE FORESTS ARE IN DANGER.

AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT ANY PROFESSION THAT CAN GATHER TOGETHER SO DISTINGUISHED AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE FOR SUCH AN INTERESTING AND COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM, WILL CERTAINLY BE ABLE TO PRODUCE THE HARD DATA WE REQUIRE. WE ALL EAGERLY AWAIT THE RESULTS OF YOUR EFFORTS.

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Speech Discours

SPEAKING NOTES FOR
CHARLES CACCIA,
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA,
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT,
BURLINGTON, VERMONT
SEPTEMBER 22, 1983.



THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO BURLINGTON TODAY TO TALK ABOUT ACID RAIN AND TO TELL YOU WHAT MY COUNTRY IS DOING. IT IS INDEED A PLEASURE FOR ME TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH SENATOR STAFFORD. HE HAS PLAYED A LARGE ROLE IN SUPPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIM ON REDUCING ACID RAIN, OUR COMMON CAUSE.

THERE IS GOOD AND SUFFICIENT REASON TO CUT BACK DRASTICALLY OUR EMISSIONS OF SULPHUR DIOXIDE AND OXIDES OF NITROGEN. THEY PRODUCE ACIDS THAT ARE SCATTERED FAR AND WIDE BY THE WINDS...ACIDS THAT HAVE BECOME A CANCER AT THE VERY HEART OF THE BIOSPHERE THAT SUSTAINS US. A GREAT DEAL IS AT STAKE IN HOW WELL AND HOW QUICKLY WE DEAL WITH THE SITUATION.

ACID RAIN IS A PROBLEM WHOSE SOLUTION WILL REQUIRE AN AMALGAMATION OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND POLITICAL ACTION.

INCREASINGLY POLITICIANS WILL HAVE TO ASSESS SCIENTIFIC JUDGEMENT. AND SCIENTISTS WILL HAVE TO RESPOND TO POLITICAL REALITIES.

INCREASINGLY WE WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS ON THE BASIS OF AN INCOMPLETE SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING -- INCOMPLETE BECAUSE SCIENTISTS NEVER CEASE IN IMPROVING AND MEASURING OUR KNOWLEDGE. INCREASINGLY THESE ENVIRONMENTAL PHENOMENA WILL BE SEEN TO BE COMPLEX NOT SIMPLE, AND OFTEN INTERNATIONAL NOT LOCAL IN SCOPE. WE MUST KNOW HOW TO MANAGE OUR SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE SO THAT THE CALL FOR MORE RESEARCH, MORE INFORMATION, MORE PRECISION DOES NOT BECOME SIMPLY AN EXCUSE FOR NOT TAKING ACTION. WE MUST BE ABLE TO JUDGE WHEN KNOWLEDGE IS SUFFICIENT; WHEN WE KNOW ENOUGH TO ACT EVEN THOUGH IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO KNOW EVEN MORE.

ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS ARE RAISED IN CONSIDERING THE CHALLENGE POSED TO OUR TWO COUNTRIES BY ACID RAIN. HALF OF OUR ACID RAIN ORIGINATES IN THE UNITED STATES AND 10 PER CENT OF YOURS COMES FROM CANADA. NINETY PERCENT OF THE ACID RAIN FALLING IN THIS COUNTRY IS AMERICAN. AND IT IS DOING SEVERE AND IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO AMERICAN INTERESTS.

BOTH OUR COUNTRIES HAVE SUFFERED SEVERE LOSSES. THIS IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT -- ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF THE IRREVERSIBILITY OF MANY OF THE INJURIES IT INFLECTS.

THE DAMAGE DONE TO JUST TWO INDUSTRIES ILLUSTRATES THIS POINT QUITE DRAMATICALLY.

SPORTFISHING. IN CANADA THIS INDUSTRY GENERATED \$1.1 BILLION IN DIRECT REVENUES DURING 1980, AND AN ADDITIONAL \$10 BILLION IN RELATED TOURIST BUSINESS EARNINGS. CENTRAL ONTARIO, FOR INSTANCE, CONTAINS POPULAR SPORTFISHING AREAS SUCH AS MUSKOKA/HALIBURTON, LESS THAN A DAY'S DRIVE FROM BURLINGTON. WE HAVE BEEN WATCHING WITH DISMAY THE PROGRESSIVE EROSION OF THESE ASSETS BY ACID RAIN. CANADIAN STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT HUNDREDS OF LAKES ARE DEAD -- MEANING THAT THEY HAVE ACID RAIN LEVELS TOO HIGH TO SUPPORT FISH LIFE. WE KNOW THAT THOUSANDS MORE ARE MOVING TOWARD THE SAME CONDITION.

THE SITUATION IN AMERICAN STATES EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI IS JUST AS DISTURBING. STUDIES BY THE CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT SHOW THAT 18 PER CENT OF THE LAKES AND 21 PER CENT OF THE STREAM MILES IN THE AREA HAVE BEEN DAMAGED BY ACID RAIN. THIRTEEN OF THE 26 STATES EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI -- STATES INCIDENTALLY IN WHICH 10 MILLION FISHING LICENCES WERE ISSUED IN 1980 -- ARE IN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE AREAS, DUE TO A LOWERING OF BUFFERING CAPACITY. NINE ARE EXTREMELY SUSCEPTIBLE. SOME OF THE BEST-DOCUMENTED ACID RAIN LOSSES TO SPORTFISHING STOCKS ARE AMERICAN LOSSES.

MUCH OF THIS DAMAGE IS BEING DONE IN PLACES WE USED TO THINK ABOUT AS SANCTUARIES -- SAFE FROM URBANIZATION, INDUSTRIAL PRESSURE AND POLLUTION. COTTAGE OWNERS WHO THOUGHT THEY HAD ESCAPED FROM POLLUTION, AND WHO WERE CAREFUL TO PROTECT THEIR LAKES, ARE AMONG THE VICTIMS. EVEN WILDERNESS AREAS AND PARKS ARE NOT IMMUNE.

WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT ACID DEPOSITIONS, WET AND DRY, AFFECT FOREST PRODUCTIVITY. IN WEST GERMANY, FIR AND SPRUCE HAVE BEEN DYING IN ALARMING QUANTITIES IN THE BLACK FOREST, THE BAVARIAN FOREST AND OTHER ANCIENT AND VALUABLE STANDS. GERMAN EXPERTS SAY THAT 50% OF THE NATION'S FORESTS ARE IN DANGER. THEIR STUDIES INDICATE THAT THE DAMAGE IS LARGELY CAUSED BY ACIDIFIED DEPOSITS GENERATED BY SO₂ EMISSIONS FROM POWER PLANTS, SMELTERS AND REFINERIES.

RESEARCH BY THE CANADIAN FORESTRY SERVICE IN NEW BRUNSWICK HAS SHOWN THAT THE GROWTH OF SEEDLINGS -- AND ULTIMATELY THE PRODUCTIVITY OF FORESTS -- CAN BE DAMAGED BY ACID PRECIPITATION. IN FACT THIS CAN OCCUR AT PH VALUES THAT ARE NOW ENCOUNTERED OVER MORE THAN 2 MILLION SQUARE MILES OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA. WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT THIS. CANADA HAS A LOT TO LOSE. FOREST SHIPMENTS FROM EASTERN CANADA WERE VALUED AT \$14 BILLION IN 1982. THE FOREST INDUSTRY IS OUR NATION'S LARGEST. ONE OUT OF EVERY 10 WORKING CANADIANS IS EMPLOYED IN IT.

SEVERE AS THEY ARE, THESE LOSSES COULD TURN OUT IN TIME TO BE A FRACTION OF OUR TOTAL PROBLEM. WE HAVE NOT REALLY ASSESSED THE EFFECTS OF THIS FORM OF POLLUTION ON HEALTH BUT SOME MEDICAL SCIENTISTS HAVE SAID THAT ACIDIFIED PARTICULATES MAY WORSEN THE PROBLEMS OF PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA AND OTHER LUNG DISEASES. THE EVENTUAL IMPACT ON DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED. SO DOES THE EXTENT OF DAMAGE TO WILDLIFE, CROPS AND PROPERTY.

IN THE LIGHT OF ALL THIS, ONE MAY WELL WONDER HOW OUR TWO NATIONS CAN HAVE WAITED SO LONG TO MOUNT A JOINT RESPONSE. EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT US THAT THE PRICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL NEGLECT MAY BE DEFERRED BUT THAT IT IS PAID EVENTUALLY -- AND THE BILL GETS HIGHER WITH TIME.

POLITICALLY SPEAKING, THERE IS SOMETHING INTRINSICALLY DIFFERENT ABOUT ACID RAIN. THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE POLLUTING PARTIES AND THE POLLUTED DISABLES THE MECHANISMS OF PUBLIC RESPONSE. IN THE PAST, THE VICTIMS OF POLLUTION COULD LOOK OUT OF THEIR WINDOWS AND SEE CAUSE AND EFFECT AT A SINGLE GLANCE. THEY COULD SEE THE CLOSED BEACHES AND THE DEAD FISH AND THE DRAINPIPES THAT WERE RESPONSIBLE. THAT KIND OF PROXIMITY TRIGGERS RAPID, COORDINATED POLITICAL RESPONSE. TODAY, THE STACKS ARE STILL IN THESE COMMUNITIES, BUT MANY OF THEM ARE TALLER NOW. THAT WAS ONE WAY WE DID AWAY WITH LOCAL AIR POLLUTION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND IN OURS. WE PUT THE WASTES HIGHER INTO THE ATMOSPHERE, THEY TRAVELLED FAR AFIELD.

THE LOCAL PROBLEM HAS GONE. COMMUNITIES FAR DOWNWIND ON THE RECEIVING END MAY BE OUTRAGED BUT THEIR LOCAL INSTITUTIONS DO NOT HAVE THE JURISDICTIONAL LEVERAGE TO EFFECT CHANGES ACROSS THE STATE OR PROVINCIAL OR NATIONAL BOUNDARIES. SO WHAT HAD BEEN LOCAL PROBLEMS BECAME INTER-JURISDICTIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS AND IF THEY ARE TO BE OVERCOME, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND COMMON ACTION ARE CLEARLY NECESSARY.

IN 1980 OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS TOOK A PROMISING FIRST STEP. WE SIGNED WHAT DIPLOMATS CALL A "MEMORANDUM OF INTENT". IN THAT DOCUMENT WE FORMALLY RECOGNIZED THAT ACID RAIN WAS A SERIOUS DANGER. WE ASSERTED OUR COMMON DETERMINATION TO REMOVE THAT DANGER. WE AGREED THAT THE BEST WAY TO TACKLE TRANS-BORDER POLLUTION WAS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS INTO THE ATMOSPHERE FROM SOURCES IN BOTH COUNTRIES.

THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION COMMITTED ITSELF TO ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ALREADY ON THE BOOKS LIMITING SO₂ EMISSIONS IN A WAY WHICH WOULD BE, AND I QUOTE "RESPONSIVE TO THE PROBLEMS OF TRANS-BORDER POLLUTION".

HOW HAVE WE PERFORMED SINCE THEN? CANADA DOES NOT GENERATE ANYWHERE NEAR THE SAME ABSOLUTE VOLUME OF SO₂. WE CANNOT BE TOO SELF-RIGHTEOUS ABOUT THAT HOWEVER BECAUSE OUR PER CAPITA CONTRIBUTION IS SOMEWHAT HIGHER. HAVING SAID THAT, WE CAN POINT TO REAL PROGRESS. IN CANADA, SMELTERS ARE OUR MAIN SO₂ SOURCES. TWO OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ARE THE INCO SMELTER AT SUDBURY, ONTARIO AND THE SMELTER AT NORANDA, QUEBEC. EMISSIONS AT INCO HAVE BEEN CUT FROM 7000 TONS PER DAY IN THE MID-1960'S TO JUST UNDER 2000 TONS PER DAY AT PRESENT TO MEET LOCAL AIR POLLUTION STANDARDS. EMISSIONS AT NORANDA WILL BE CUT 40 PER CENT BY 1990 FROM 1980 LEVELS. OUR POWER GENERATING SECTOR, WHICH IS A RELATIVELY SMALL PART OF OUR PROBLEM, HAS ALSO BEGUN TO CLEAN UP EMISSIONS. ONTARIO HYDRO, ONE OF OUR MAJOR UTILITIES HAS BEEN REQUIRED TO CUT EMISSIONS 43% BY 1990. OVERALL, TO CURB ACID RAIN, NOT LOCAL AIR POLLUTION, WE ARE COMMITTED NOW TO CUTTING ALLOWABLE SO₂ EMISSIONS EAST OF THE SASKATCHEWAN/MANITOBA BORDER 25% BY THE END OF THIS DECADE. WE HAVE ALSO STATED OUR COMMITMENT TO DOING THE NEXT STEP; ANOTHER 25% IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

ON THE AMERICAN SIDE THERE HAVE BEEN FEW REDUCTIONS IN ALLOWABLE LIMITS OF SO₂ EMISSIONS SINCE THE MEMORANDUM.

TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE AND THE TRUTH IS THAT WE KNOW ENOUGH TO ACT.

CONFIRMATION OF THAT CAME IN A REPORT SUBMITTED IN FEBRUARY 1983 BY THE CANADAS/U.S. WORKING GROUP SET UP TO STUDY ACID RAIN UNDER THE MEMORANDUM OF INTENT.

I WOULD LIKE TO SUMMARIZE THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THIS REPORT WITH PARTICULAR CARE. THE GROUP AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

1. DAMAGE IS BEING DONE TO AQUATIC SYSTEMS IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.
2. THAT DAMAGE IS BEING CAUSED BY SULPHATE DEPOSITIONS.
3. THESE DEPOSITIONS AND THIS DAMAGE ARE DOWNWIND OF MAJOR INDUSTRIAL SOURCES OF SO_2 .
4. IN AREAS RECEIVING DEPOSITIONS OF 18 LBS. PER ACRE PER YEAR OR ABOVE (AND THERE ARE PLENTY FAR ABOVE) YOU FIND DAMAGE. BELOW THAT LEVEL YOU DO NOT.
5. THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM IS TO REDUCE SULPHUR DEPOSITIONS.
6. IF WE DO NOT CONTROL SO_2 EMISSIONS THEY WILL INCREASE THROUGH TO THE END OF THE CENTURY.

THE INEVITABLE CONCLUSION, IT SEEMS TO ME, IS THAT WE SHOULD ACT QUICKLY TO BRING DEPOSITIONS DOWN TO THAT SPECIFIED, SAFE LEVEL OF 18 LBS. PER ACRE PER YEAR. THAT CONCLUSION WAS CONFIRMED THIS SUMMER BY THE TWO PEER REVIEW GROUPS, ONE CHAIRED BY THE U.S. OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY (NIERENBERG) AND THE OTHER BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA. BOTH GROUPS EMPHASIZED THE URGENT NEED FOR ACTION.

BASING OUR POSITION ON THESE REPORTS AND ON OTHER EVIDENCE, WE HAVE MADE A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. WE KNOW WE NEED TO GET SULPHATE DEPOSITS DOWN TO 18 LBS. PER ACRE PER YEAR. TO DO THAT, WE KNOW THAT WE NEED TO REDUCE EMISSIONS ACROSS THE BOARD, EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI AND THE MANITOBA BORDER, BY ABOUT 50 PER CENT.

I REITERATED MY GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THIS WHEN I MET IN WASHINGTON TWO WEEKS AGO WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR, BILL RUCKELSHAUS.

WE ARE SEEKING AGREEMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES ON THREE ITEMS:

1. A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN SULPHUR DIOXIDE EMISSIONS;
2. A COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL TARGET OF 18 LBS. OF SULPHATE PER ACRE PER YEAR; AND
3. THE CREATION OF A BILATERAL MECHANISM TO REVIEW NEW SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AND TO MONITOR THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

THE APPROACH WE PROPOSED RESPECTS BOTH ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERATIVES. THE TARGET IS 1990. THIS GIVES THE INDUSTRIES INVOLVED TIME TO ADAPT. IT ALSO MAY ALLOW THEM TO BENEFIT FROM CHEAPER ABATEMENT SYSTEMS DEVELOPED BETWEEN NOW AND THEN.

IT IS ALSO A PLAN THAT FOCUSES ON RESULTS RATHER THAN ON METHODS. OUR SITUATIONS DIFFER AND SO WILL OUR STRATEGIES. HOW EACH NATION GETS EMISSIONS DOWN TO THE REQUIRED LEVELS IS ITS OWN AFFAIR. BUT MAKING THESE REDUCTIONS WILL BE A SOLEMN AND IRONCLAD COMMITMENT.

WE KNOW THIS PROGRAM WILL COST MONEY -- THE REPAIR OF ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE ALWAYS DOES. BUT THE EXTENT OF THESE COSTS SHOULD NOT BE DISTORTED TO FANTASTIC PROPORTIONS. THE CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY HAS DEVELOPED ESTIMATES BASED ON BEST AND WORST CASE ASSUMPTIONS. THEY SAY A CLEANUP IN THIS COUNTRY WOULD COST FROM \$2.5 TO \$4.7 BILLION A YEAR BY 1990. TO UTILITY RATE-PAYERS IN AFFECTED AREAS THIS WOULD MEAN AN INCREASE IN YEARLY BILLS OF TWO CENTS ON THE DOLLAR AFTER ALLOWING FOR INFLATION.

THE COST TO CANADA WOULD BE \$1 BILLION PER YEAR BY 1990. IN PER CAPITA TERMS THE COST TO EACH AMERICAN WOULD BE FROM \$9 TO \$20. TO EACH CANADIAN THE COST WOULD BE \$41. LET ME ADD THAT ALTHOUGH MANY THINGS IN CANADA ARE POLITICALLY CONTROVERSIAL THIS IS NOT ONE OF THEM. REPEATED POLLS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED ON THE SUBJECT OF ACID RAIN AND ITS CONTROL. OVERWHELMINGLY CANADIANS SUPPORT CLEANUP ACTION.

WILL WE GET A JOINT PROGRAM UNDER WAY IN TIME TO AVOID AN ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHE? UNTIL A FEW MONTHS AGO, I MUST SAY THAT WE SEEMED TO BE WHEEL-SPINNING. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS.

THE ESSENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IS A REGARD FOR TOMORROW AS WELL AS TODAY, A THOUGHTFUL ACCEPTANCE OF LONG-TERM ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES. JOHN F. KENNEDY EXPRESSED IT THIS WAY: "IT IS OUR TASK IN OUR TIME AND IN OUR GENERATION TO HAND DOWN UNDIMINISHED TO THOSE WHO COME AFTER US, THAT WHICH WAS HANDED DOWN TO US BY THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE -- THE NATURAL WEALTH AND BEAUTY WHICH IS OURS."

IT IS A TASK FOR BOTH AMERICA AND CANADA.

IT WAS VERY ENCOURAGING TO SEE, EARLIER THIS YEAR, THAT 194 OF 224 NEW HAMPSHIRE TOWNS HAD PASSED RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR THE UNITED STATES TO JOIN WITH CANADA IN A CLEANUP OF ACID RAIN ALONG THE LINES I HAVE DESCRIBED.

THE INFORMATION DEVELOPED BY THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE IS AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT. THIS SUGGESTS THAT A MUCH LARGER AREA OF THE UNITED STATES IS SUSCEPTIBLE THAN WAS PREVIOUSLY ASSUMED. AN INTERNATIONAL CONSTITUENCY OF THE "RAINED-UPON" SEEMS TO BE FORMING AND EXPANDING, INCLUDING WESTERN EUROPE.

THERE ARE INTERESTING SIGNS TOO THAT EVEN COMMUNITIES IN WHICH POLLUTING SOURCES ARE LOCATED ARE REALIZING THAT ACID RAIN IS ULTIMATELY A THREAT TO THEM. THE CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER, AN IMPORTANT VOICE IN A MAJOR SO₂-PRODUCING STATE, RECENTLY CALLED FOR A CLEANUP OF EMISSIONS. POLITICALLY, CONCERNS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF ACID RAIN, OUT OF TOWN, OUT OF PROVINCE, OUT OF STATE, ARE REFLECTING THE WIDER, NATIONAL INTEREST AMONG POLITICAL FIGURES.

I SHOULD SAY, FRANKLY, THAT I WAS GREATLY ENCOURAGED WHEN MEETING WITH BILL RUCKELSHAUS BY HIS FORTHCOMING APPROACH TO THE ACID RAIN ISSUE. I KNOW HE IS REVIEWING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT POSITION, AND I BELIEVE HE IS LOOKING FOR METHODS OF ACTION, NOT SIMPLY FURTHER STUDIES IN RESPONSE TO THE ACID RAIN CHALLENGE.

IN CONCLUSION, LET ME EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT THE ACTION OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION WILL BE ALONG THESE LINES:

1. A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN SULPHUR DIOXIDE EMISSIONS;
2. A COMMITMENT TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL TARGET OF 18 LBS. OF SULPHATE DEPOSITION PER ACRE PER YEAR BY 1990; AND
3. THE CREATION OF A BILATERAL SCIENTIFIC REVIEW AND MONITORING MECHANISM.

ACID RAIN IS SO CLEARLY A DANGER TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA THAT WE SIMPLY CANNOT ALLOW IT TO RUN ITS DESTRUCTIVE COURSE.

WHAT WE WANT IS TO RESTORE OUR LAKES, FORESTS AND FISH TO THEIR HEALTHY AND CLEAN CONDITION. THIS IS AN OBLIGATION WE HAVE TO OUR CHILDREN AND GENERATIONS TO COME.

THANK YOU.

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Speech Discours

STATEMENT BY
CHARLES CACCIA,
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA,
TO A MEDIA BRIEFING
ON ACID RAIN,
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 27, 1983.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



Acid rain is a problem whose solution will require an amalgamation of scientific knowledge and political action. Acid rain is an environmental threat - especially because of the irreversibility of many of the injuries it inflicts. Both our countries have suffered severe losses.

The U.S. still has no policy to deal with acid rain. This is a great disappointment to me and to all Canadians.

Canada attaches great importance to urgent and effective action to reduce the high levels of sulphur deposition which are causing serious damage to the lakes, rivers and forests of large areas of North America. The Canadian Government remains convinced that the integration of Canadian and U.S. abatement programs is necessary to reverse the damage currently being done to the environment in both countries. In areas of particular concern, such as the Muskoka/Haliburton area north of Toronto, significantly more than half of the acid rain is of U.S. origin. Even if Canada were to virtually cease all SO₂ emissions, deposition in many sensitive areas in Canada would continue to exceed the 18 lbs pounds per-acre per-year objective needed to protect moderately sensitive lakes and rivers.

The Canadian Government is convinced that the extent and intensity of the damage will increase unless remedial action is taken. An area of more than two million square miles, mostly in the eastern half of the continent, is vulnerable to acid rain. The natural resources base at risk sustains vital components of the economy and life style in many of these areas. The gross revenues potentially at risk account for about eight per cent of the Canadian gross national product.

The first formal expressions of concern for acid rain were exchanged in late 1978 through diplomatic notes and through the creation of a Canada-U.S. scientific task force known as the Bilateral Research Consultation Group. Both countries formalized their commitments to work jointly to solve the problem with the signing of the Memorandum of Intent in August to conclude a transboundary air pollution agreement as quickly as possible.

Negotiations under the Memorandum broke down in June 1982 when the U.S. side rejected as premature a Canadian proposal to reduce wet sulphate deposition in sensitive areas to no more than 18 pounds per-acre per-year by 1990. To achieve this, Canada was prepared to commit itself to a reduction of up to 50 per cent of 1980 allowable SO₂ emissions contingent on parallel U.S. action. In the meantime, Canada has proceeded with a unilateral 25 per cent reduction to be in place by 1990. These control actions are over and above those required to achieve local air quality.

Canadian federal and provincial governments are prepared to do their share in any joint program or strategies directed at reducing emissions. Canadian Ministers of the Environment, at a meeting in Fredericton in the last week of September, reaffirmed their common commitment to reduce sulphate deposition to less than 18 lbs per-acre per-year. My provincial counterparts and I agreed on the need to integrate Canadian and U.S. abatement programs and discussed further strategies beyond the initial 25 per cent reduction.

Canada is seeking a transboundary air pollution agreement with the United States which encompasses:

- i) commitment to the 18 lbs/acre/year environmental objective:
- ii) implementation of significant emission reductions directed at achieving that objective:
- iii) creation of a bilateral mechanism to monitor the progress of, and recommend necessary changes to, abatement programs.

I would be prepared to negotiate, on an urgent basis, a bilateral agreement with the United States, if examination of an Administration policy on acid rain indicates that scope exists for joint action which would achieve the results necessary.

I will be visiting Washington next week. I plan to meet with a number of Senators and congressmen to try to convince them of the seriousness of the acid rain problem.

Minister
Environment Canada

Ministre
Environnement Canada

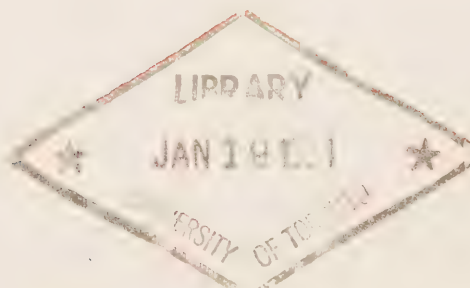
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Speech Discours

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
CHARLES CACCIA
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
TO ACID RAIN '84 CONFERENCE
MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
JANUARY 8, 1984

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Canada



I COMMEND BOTH THE FRIENDS OF THE EARTH FOUNDATION AND THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CITIZENS' TASK FORCE ON ACID RAIN FOR DRAWING TOGETHER SUCH A DISTINGUISHED GATHERING. WHAT BRINGS US ALL TO MANCHESTER TODAY IS AN ISSUE THAT RESPECTS NO BOUNDARIES. IT BRINGS TOGETHER NORTH AND SOUTH ON THIS CONTINENT, EAST AND WEST IN EUROPE. WE ARE HERE ALSO AS THE RESULT OF WHAT SEEMED A SMART IDEA SOME YEARS AGO: TALLER STACKS, REACHING INTO THE SKY LIKE MODERN VERSIONS OF GOTHIC TOWERS. CONTRARY TO ANTICIPATION, THE STUFF DID NOT DISSOLVE IN THE ATMOSPHERE. IT JUST TRAVELLED FURTHER. A DISAPPOINTMENT INDEED FOR A CULTURE THAT HAD GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO THE IDEA THAT THE SOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS COULD BE ACHIEVED THROUGH "DILUTION AND DISSOLUTION". IF THE OCEANS SEEMED OBLIGING ENOUGH TO DILUTE, WHY SHOULD THE ATMOSPHERE NOT DO US A SERVICE TOO? THE CHICKEN, AS THEY SAY, EVENTUALLY CAME HOME TO ROOST. THIS IS WHY WE ARE GATHERED HERE TODAY.

BRITISH CHEMIST ROBERT ANGUS SMITH FIRST USED THE TERM "ACID RAIN" IN 1872 IN A 600-PAGE TREATISE EXAMINING LINKS BETWEEN THE SOOTY SKIES OVER MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, AND THE ACIDITY HE DISCOVERED IN LOCAL PRECIPITATION. SMITH'S PIONEERING WORK WAS ALL BUT FORGOTTEN UNTIL THE POST-WAR SURGE OF INDUSTRIALIZATION WITH THE INCREASING USE OF FOSSIL FUELS AND GREATER PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS OF POLLUTION. IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1967 THAT SWEDISH SOIL SCIENTIST SVANTE ODEN OBSERVING INCREASINGLY ACIDIC RAINFALLS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME IN CERTAIN AREAS ETCHED ACID RAIN INTO THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY BY DRAMATICALLY LABELLING IT MAN'S "CHEMICAL WAR" ON NATURE.

AT THE 1972 UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT, A SMALL GROUP OF SWEDISH SCIENTISTS TRIED TO MAKE POLITICIANS AND THE PUBLIC AWARE OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SULPHUR EMISSIONS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES AND THE OCCURRENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGES IN OTHERS. THE SCIENTISTS CONVEYED THEIR CONCERN TO THE ASSEMBLED POLICY MAKERS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT THE PROBLEMS OF AIR POLLUTION HAVE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS; THAT AIR POLLUTION DOES NOT HALT AT NATIONAL BOUNDARIES AND THAT ONE COUNTRY CAN BE FORCED TO PAY DEARLY FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY HARMFUL ACTIVITIES IN ANOTHER COUNTRY.

THE DECLARATION FROM THE 1972 UN CONFERENCE INCLUDED RECOGNITION OF THE PHENOMENON OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORT OF AIR-BORNE POLLUTANTS.

IT IS WORTHWHILE READING PRINCIPLE 21:

"STATES HAVE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARTER OF THE UN AND THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, THE SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO EXPLOIT THEIR OWN RESOURCES PURSUANT TO THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ACTIVITIES WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION OR CONTROL DO NOT CAUSE DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT OF OTHER STATES OR OF AREAS BEYOND THE LIMITS OF NATIONAL JURISDICTION".

THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) SUBSEQUENTLY UNDERTOOK SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON THE ACIDIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT. THE OECD STUDIES, IN 1976, CONFIRMED THE EXISTENCE OF THE ACID RAIN PROBLEM IN EUROPE AND THE FACT THAT ACIDIC DEPOSITION IN ONE COUNTRY COULD BE TRACED TO EMISSIONS IN ANOTHER. THOSE CONCLUSIONS SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM.

THE NEGOTIATIONS CULMINATED IN 1979 IN THE SIGNING OF THE ECE (ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE) CONVENTION ON LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION. THIRTY-TWO EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND THE GOVERNMENTS OF CANADA AND THE U.S. RECOGNIZED THE NEED TO DEAL WITH SULPHUR POLLUTION.

THE ECE CONVENTION IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION. IT ESTABLISHED AN INTERNATIONAL GOAL TO LIMIT AND REDUCE SO₂ EMISSIONS. IT ESTABLISHED GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATIVE RESEARCH, EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND MONITORING OF AIR POLLUTION. IT IS A REITERATION OF PRINCIPLE 21 OF THE 1972 STOCKHOLM DECLARATION.

AT THE JUNE 1982 STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE ON THE ACIDIFICATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, REPRESENTATIVES OF EUROPEAN AND NORTH AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS CONFIRMED THE RECOGNITION THAT ACIDIFICATION IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM REQUIRING STRONG CONTROL MEASURES.

ONE YEAR LATER, IN JUNE 1983 THERE WAS AN INTERNATIONAL DECISION TO REDUCE SO₂ EMISSIONS BY AN INITIAL 30% BY 1993. AUSTRIA, DENMARK, FINLAND, NORWAY, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, WEST GERMANY AND CANADA ENDORSED THE DECISION. GOVERNMENTS IN THESE COUNTRIES HAVE RESPONDED TO THE CALL FOR REDUCTION IN VARIOUS WAYS. WEST GERMANY'S CLEAN AIR POLICY, FOR EXAMPLE, CALLS FOR AN ANNUAL 1.0 TO 1.5 MILLION TON REDUCTION IN SO₂ EMISSIONS OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS.

IN CANADA, WE CONSIDER ACID RAIN AN ISSUE OF GREAT ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE IT AFFECTS SEVERAL IMPORTANT INDUSTRIES OF OURS. PRIMARILY FORESTS AND FOREST PRODUCTS, SPORTFISHING AND TOURISM.

WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT ACID DEPOSITIONS AFFECT FOREST PRODUCTIVITY. WE SEE THAT FIR AND SPRUCE HAVE BEEN DYING IN ALARMING QUANTITIES IN THE BLACK FOREST, THE BAVARIAN FOREST AND OTHER ANCIENT AND VALUABLE STANDS THROUGHOUT CENTRAL EUROPE. GERMAN EXPERTS SAY THAT 50% OF THE NATION'S FORESTS ARE IN DANGER. THE PICTURE THAT IS EMERGING IS ONE OF DAMAGED STANDS, INHIBITED GROWTH, SLOW BUT INEXORABLE ILLNESS.

THE FOREST INDUSTRY IS CANADA'S LARGEST. ONE OUT OF EVERY 10 WORKING CANADIANS IS EMPLOYED IN IT. THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FOREST INDUSTRY IN CANADA IS THE ECONOMIC EQUIVALENT OF THREE TIMES THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY IN THE U.S.

IF NOTHING IS DONE TO CURB ACID RAIN, WE PROJECT WE WILL LOSE 48,000 LAKES IN CANADA BY THE END OF THE CENTURY. ALREADY, 2,000 TO 4,000 LAKES IN ONTARIO HAVE BECOME SO ACIDIFIED THAT THEY CAN NO LONGER SUPPORT TROUT AND BASS, AND SOME 1,300 MORE IN QUEBEC ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING DESTROYED. IN NOVA SCOTIA, NINE RIVERS USED AS SPAWNING GROUNDS BY ATLANTIC SALMON NO LONGER TEEM WITH FISH DURING THE SPRING.

IN CANADA, THE SPORTFISHING INDUSTRY GENERATED \$1.1 BILLION IN DIRECT REVENUES DURING 1980, AND \$10 BILLION IN TOURIST BUSINESS EARNINGS.

SEVERE AS THEY ARE, THESE LOSSES COULD TURN OUT IN TIME TO BE A FRACTION OF OUR TOTAL PROBLEM. SOME MEDICAL SCIENTISTS HAVE SAID THAT ACIDIFIED PARTICULATES MAY WORSEN THE PROBLEMS OF PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA AND OTHER LUNG DISEASES. THE EVENTUAL IMPACT ON DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED. SO DOES THE EXTENT OF DAMAGE TO CROPS AND PROPERTY.

IN CANADA, THE REVENUES AT RISK ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 8 PER CENT OF OUR GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT. EUROPEAN ESTIMATES ARE ALSO ALARMING. AND HERE IN THE UNITED STATES, AN EPA COMMISSIONED REPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING ESTIMATES THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY ACID RAIN IN THE EASTERN U.S. AT \$5 BILLION PER ANNUM. FIVE BILLION DOLLARS WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN MODERNIZING THE TECHNIQUES OF COAL BURNING UTILITIES ACROSS THE NATION. AND THE WYOMING STUDY PROJECTS DAMAGE COSTS WILL INCREASE TO \$15 BILLION PER YEAR BY THE END OF THE CENTURY.

THE NATURE OF THE DAMAGE MAKES POLITICAL ACTION SLOW AND DIFFICULT. THE DAMAGE OCCURS FAR AWAY FROM THE SOURCE. THE DAMAGE IS SLOW IN MAKING ITSELF VISIBLE. THE DAMAGE IS INSIDIOUS. THE QUESTION IS: HOW MUCH DAMAGE DO WE WANT TO WITNESS BEFORE WE GET GOING WITH A THOROUGH CLEAN-UP.

WHEN WE PUT ALL THESE ELEMENTS TOGETHER, AND AS POLITICIANS WE MUST, WE INEVITABLY COME TO THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSION: THE TIME HAS COME TO TREAT THE ENVIRONMENT AS A MEANS OF PRODUCTION OF THE SAME IMPORTANCE AS TRAINED, SKILLED LABOUR, OF THE SAME IMPORTANCE AS ABUNDANT, LOW-COST CAPITAL, AS IMPORTANT AS MODERN PLANTS AND EQUIPMENT.

OR LET ME PUT IT IN ANOTHER WAY: HOW CAN WE HAVE A HEALTHY ECONOMY IF WE DO NOT HAVE A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT? FOR HOW LONG CAN WE GO ON COUNTING ON HAVING A HEALTHY LABOUR FORCE IF WE DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO THE QUALITY OF AIR AND WATER AVAILABLE TO THAT LABOUR FORCE? IT IS CLEAR THAT IN THE EIGHTIES, INDUSTRIAL AND URBAN PLANNERS WILL HAVE TO FOCUS ON AND INVEST IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, AND VIEW IT AS BEING OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE AS ACCESS TO CAPITAL AND LABOUR.

WE IN CANADA ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONSCIOUS OF THESE VALUES. BUSINESS IS BEGINNING TO PLAN WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS. NEWLY BUILT PLANTS EMPLOY THE LATEST IN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY TECHNOLOGY. WE WANT TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS PLANET IN ACID RAIN TERMS AS WELL AS IN PEACE TERMS.

AND TODAY YOUR INITIATIVE THAT BRINGS TOGETHER CONCERNED AMERICANS AND CANADIANS DEMONSTRATES ANOTHER FACET OF THE ACID RAIN ISSUE: THAT WE FIND OURSELVES, IN A SITUATION OF INTERTWINED INTERESTS. WE CAUSE DAMAGE TO EACH OTHER AND WE KNOW THAT THE REMOVAL OF THE DAMAGE IS POSSIBLE ONLY IF WE MOVE TOGETHER. WE ARE READY.

IN CANADA WE HAVE DONE OUR HOMEWORK. FIRST WE DETERMINED AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF WET SULPHATE DEPOSITION, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NATURE OF OUR GEOLOGY. ON THE BASIS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH WE FOUND THE ANSWER TO BE NO MORE THAN 18 LBS/ACRE/YEAR.

SECOND WE HAD TO DEVELOP THE POLITICAL WILL AT HOME. AND WE HAVE DONE SO. WE HAVE AN ALL-PARTY, UNANIMOUS POSITION ON ACID RAIN IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. IN ADDITION WE HAVE A PLAN FOR JOINT ACTION BETWEEN THE PROVINCES AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, BY VIRTUE OF THE AGREEMENT OF LAST SEPTEMBER IN FREDERICTON. WE ARRIVED AT THIS PLAN IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MEETING IN HALIFAX LAST OCTOBER WITH MESSRS. SHULTZ AND RUCKELSHAUS, AND IT IS TO BE PUT INTO EFFECT UPON THE SIGNATURE OF A TREATY ON ACID RAIN WITH THE U.S.A. THUS, WE DO HAVE A PLAN.

THIRDLY, WE HAVE PROGRAMS, COMMITMENTS AND REGULATIONS IN/BY WHICH, BY 1990, WE REDUCE CANADIAN EMISSIONS BY 25% FROM 1980 LEVELS.

FOURTHLY, HAVING DONE ALL THIS, WE ARE MORE THAN READY TO SIT DOWN WITH YOU SO AS TO ARRIVE AT AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY OF THE KIND WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT FOR OVER FOUR YEARS.

IF YOU DETECT A TONE OF IMPATIENCE MIXED WITH FRUSTRATION, YES, YOU ARE RIGHT. IT IS THERE. BUT IT IS THERE BECAUSE OF TWO REASONS AT LEAST: ONE BEING THAT WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE REPEATED IN NORTH AMERICA THE BAD EXPERIENCE EUROPEANS ARE FACING AS A RESULT OF THEIR NEGLIGENCE; TWO BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT, AS MUCH AS WE WOULD LIKE TO GO IT ALONE, WE CAN NOT RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM UNLESS WE TACKLE IT TOGETHER. WE ARE IN IT TOGETHER. YOUR ECONOMIC INTERESTS WILL BE AS WELL SERVED AS OURS.

DO YOU REMEMBER YEARS AGO, THE ISSUE OF PHOSPHOROUS
EUTROPHICATION IN THE GREAT LAKES, THE DYING OF FISH IN LAKE
ERIE BECAUSE OF ALGAE SPREADING WILD IN WATERS OVERLOADED WITH
PHOSPHOROUS FROM MUNICIPAL WASTE? WELL, WE WRESTLED THAT
PROBLEM TO THE GROUND TOGETHER. LET'S DO IT AGAIN WITH ACID
RAIN.

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STATEMENT

Federal Environment Minister Charles Caccia, and his provincial colleagues: Andrew Brandt, Ontario's Environment Minister; Adrien Ouellette, Quebec's Environment Minister; Hal Andrews, Newfoundland's Environment Minister; William Harmer, New Brunswick's Environment Minister; George Moodie, Nova Scotia's Environment Minister; Ben Marr, Deputy Minister of the Environment from British Columbia; W. Solodzuk, Deputy Minister of the Environment from Alberta, and Tom Owen, Deputy Minister of Environment, Work Place Safety & Health from Manitoba, agreed that Canada would take further unilateral action to reduce emissions causing acid rain.

In a statement following a meeting in Ottawa of Environment Ministers, Mr. Caccia said, "We will proceed independently from the United States in developing a Canadian solution on the matter of acid rain and we hope that the U.S. will join us at the earliest possible date."

Ministers reaffirmed their agreement on the need to reduce wet sulphate deposition to 20 kilograms per hectare per year, the level which lakes and rivers can tolerate without damage occuring. Reaching this level in the sensitive areas of Eastern Canada will require emission reductions of up to 50% in Canada and major emission reduction in the United States.



Ministers agreed on a strategy of achieving a 50% reduction from 1980 allowable emissions by 1994.

"This strategy represents a combination of the agreement at Fredericton and decisions to be made by a working group established here today," Mr. Caccia said. The working group will consist of an open membership of the federal and provincial ministers of the environment that will put into place a specific program with the objective of reaching the 50% target by 1994.

Canada is already committed to a 25 % reduction of SO₂ emissions by 1990. This includes abatement measures at Inco in Sudbury, at Ontario Hydro and at Noranda's copper smelter in Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec. It also includes reductions in SO₂ as a result of switching from coal and oil to natural gas under the National Energy Program.

Acid rain is caused by the emissions of sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) from industry, coal-fired electricity plants and automobiles. These substances are transported hundreds of miles, transformed into sulphates and nitrates and fall to earth in rain, snow or dust.

Acid rain damages water systems so they can no longer sustain fish life. Acid rain is threatening forests, slowing their growth and killing seedlings. It is also capable of contaminating our drinking water supplies by leaching metals from soils and water pipes. Buildings and monuments are also showing the effects of acidic erosion.

Speech
Discours

NOTES FOR OPENING REMARKS BY
CHARLES CACCIA
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
AT THE CANADA-EUROPE
MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ACID RAIN
OTTAWA
MARCH 20, 1984

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DISTINGUISHED MINISTERS AND SPECIAL GUESTS:

WELCOME TO THE OPENING SESSION OF THE CANADA-EUROPE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ACID RAIN.

THE ECE CONVENTION ON LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION, THE FIRST COOPERATIVE EFFORT AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO CONTROL AND REDUCE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION, HAS NOW BEEN IN FORCE FOR A LITTLE MORE THAN ONE YEAR.

WE OWE MUCH TO THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SCANDINAVIAN GOVERNMENTS, IN ACHIEVING THIS SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD REDUCING ACID DEPOSITION. THE CONVENTION CALLS ON THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO DEVELOP POLICIES AND STRATEGIES TO COMBAT TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION. IT IS THIS COMMITMENT WHICH BRINGS US HERE TODAY.

HOWEVER, EVEN WITH THE EXCELLENT WORK UNDER THIS CONVENTION, THE QUESTION REMAINS, ARE OUR NUMBERS ADEQUATE TO ERADICATE THE PROBLEM?

THE LAKES AND THE FORESTS THAT HAVE BEEN DAMAGED BY ACID RAIN COULD REMAIN IN THAT DAMAGED CONDITION FOR DECADES, EVEN IF WE EACH REDUCE IMMEDIATELY THE EMISSIONS CAUSING THE DAMAGE.

NONE OF US HERE TODAY CAN WIN THE FIGHT AGAINST ACID RAIN BY ACTING ALONE. THIS CONFERENCE IS BEING CONVENED TO ADDRESS THE URGENT NEED FOR ALL PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION TO JOIN IN OUR COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES NOW TO REDUCE SULPHUR EMISSIONS, AND TO INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN US. THE FACT THAT NOT ALL PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ARE HERE AT THIS CONFERENCE UNDERLINES THE NEED FOR DETERMINATION ON OUR PART TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE.

WE ARE HERE TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE ON THE EFFECTS ACID RAIN HAS HAD ON OUR FORESTS. IN SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES THIS HAS BEEN DISASTROUS.

WE WILL REVIEW INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL STRATEGIES THAT ARE CURRENTLY IN PLACE TO REDUCE ACID RAIN AND THEN DISCUSS NEW APPROACHES TOWARD SOLVING THE PROBLEM. WE ALL SHARE THIS GLOBAL ATMOSPHERE AND WE SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PRESERVE ITS QUALITY FOR OUR OWN HEALTH AND PROSPERITY AND THAT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS.

WITH THIS IN MIND I PROPOSE THAT WE MOVE ON TO CONSIDERATION OF THE ITEMS ON OUR AGENDA.

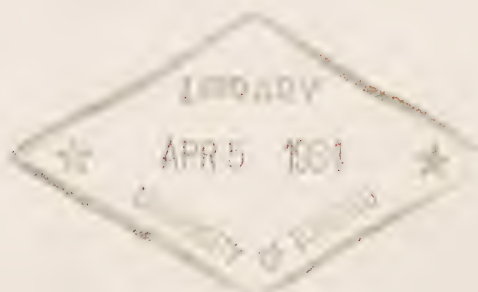
THE FIRST ITEM WILL BE THE REPORT BY MINISTERS ON NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO REDUCE LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION.

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Speech Discours

NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
CHARLES CACCIA
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AT THE CANADA-EUROPE
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OTTAWA
MARCH 20, 1984

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FELLOW DELEGATES:

AS WE MEET HERE TODAY, PEOPLE IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET. OUR WORLD FACES DIFFICULT POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS ALL REQUIRING URGENT SOLUTIONS. DISARMAMENT AND ENERGY ISSUES, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE QUESTIONS, ECONOMIC MATTERS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS - ALL PREOCCUPY PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENTS IN MANY NATIONS. I BELIEVE ALL OF US HERE TODAY RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. IN CANADA, WHERE OUR ECONOMY IS SO HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON A NATURAL RESOURCE BASE, WE KNOW THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE QUALITY OF OUR WATER, OUR AIR AND OUR SOIL IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE TO WHICH THAT DEVELOPMENT MUST CONTRIBUTE. WE REGARD ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERESTS AS COMPLEMENTARY TO EACH OTHER. WE SEE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AS ESSENTIAL PLANNING TOOLS TO SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS, WE WILL FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE ACID RAIN PROBLEM - AN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE WHOSE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES ARE FORMIDABLE.

I WOULD LIKE TO DESCRIBE THE ACID RAIN SITUATION IN CANADA AND OUR POLICY TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM.

ACID RAIN POSES A THREAT TO THE BASIC ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF MY COUNTRY: FORESTS, LAKES AND RIVERS, FISH, AGRICULTURE AND WILDLIFE.

THERE ARE INCREASINGLY STRONG FEARS THAT ACID DEPOSITION IS RETARDING THE REGENERATION OF OUR FORESTS. CANADA'S FOREST INDUSTRY IS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO OUR ECONOMY, EMPLOYING ONE IN TEN CANADIANS, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY. SHIPMENTS OF FOREST PRODUCTS FROM EASTERN CANADA AMOUNT TO ABOUT \$15 BILLION A YEAR.

OF THE LAKES SURVEYED IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO, 43% ARE VULNERABLE TO ACIDIFICATION; IN MANY OF THEM, THERE ARE ALREADY CRITICAL SIGNS OF REDUCED NEUTRALIZING CAPACITY. A SIMILAR SITUATION EXISTS IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC. THE SALMON FISHERY IN OUR ATLANTIC PROVINCES IS SUFFERING THE IMPACT OF ACID RAIN. IN NOVA SCOTIA, SALMON NO LONGER RUN IN NINE FORMER SALMON RIVERS, AND THERE ARE INITIAL SIGNS OF ACIDIFICATION IN TWICE AS MANY AGAIN. SPORTS FISHING IN EASTERN CANADA IS A ONE BILLION DOLLAR A YEAR INDUSTRY. IT IS AT RISK.

BUILDING EROSION AND DECAY FROM ACID RAIN AND ITS PRECURSORS COSTS HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS EACH YEAR.

THE NATURAL RESOURCE BASE AT RISK DUE TO ACID RAIN SUSTAINS VITAL COMPONENTS OF THE ECONOMY AND LIFESTYLE IN MUCH OF EASTERN CANADA. THE REVENUES FROM THESE THREATENED RESOURCES ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 8% OF CANADA'S GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS SHOW THAT EIGHT OUT OF TEN CANADIANS CONSIDER ACID RAIN A SERIOUS PROBLEM.

CANADA'S POLICY ON ACID RAIN IS TO OBTAIN REDUCTIONS IN SULPHUR DIOXIDE EMISSIONS IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE DAMAGING LOADINGS TO OUR ENVIRONMENT. IN FEBRUARY 1982, FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS AGREED TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVE - WE ARE COMMITTED TO LIMITING WET SULPHATE DEPOSITION TO NO MORE THAN 20 KILOGRAMS PER HECTARE PER YEAR, WHICH, ACCORDING TO OUR SCIENTISTS, IS THE LEVEL NEEDED TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO MODERATELY SENSITIVE LAKES AND RIVERS.

ALLOWABLE SO₂ EMISSIONS IN EASTERN CANADA IN 1980 TOTALLED ABOUT 4.5 MILLION TONNES. THE MAJOR SOURCE OF EMISSIONS IS THE NICKEL AND COPPER SMELTING INDUSTRY WHICH PRODUCED ABOUT 60% OF THE SO₂ EMISSIONS. UTILITIES PRODUCE ABOUT 16% AND NON-UTILITY FUEL USE ABOUT 13%. ANY ACID RAIN CONTROL PROGRAM IN CANADA WILL HAVE TO FOCUS PRIMARILY ON THE SMELTING INDUSTRY BUT THESE OTHER SOURCES ARE ALSO IMPORTANT.

WE HAVE AGREED TO REDUCE OUR SO₂ EMISSIONS IN THE EASTERN PART OF CANADA BY 50% BY 1994. AS A RESULT OF PROGRAMS, REGULATIONS AND COMMITMENTS BY PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, A 25% REDUCTION IN SO₂ EMISSIONS FROM 1980 BASE CASE LEVELS WILL BE IN PLACE BY 1990. THESE REDUCTIONS INCLUDE:

- 1) SIGNIFICANT CUTBACKS IN EMISSIONS AT THE INCO NICKEL SMELTER IN SUDBURY, ONTARIO, THROUGH PROCESSES INVOLVING INCREASED PYRRHOTITE REJECTION;
- 2) A 40% REDUCTION IN SO₂ EMISSIONS FROM THE COPPER SMELTER IN NORANDA, QUEBEC;
- 3) A 43% REDUCTION IN SO₂ EMISSIONS FROM ONTARIO HYDRO, CANADA'S LARGEST UTILITY, THROUGH PROCESS CHANGES SUCH AS COAL WASHING, BLENDING FUEL AND INCREASED USE OF NUCLEAR GENERATED POWER;
- 4) A 300,000 TONNE REDUCTION IN SO₂ EMISSIONS AS A RESULT OF SWITCHING FROM COAL AND OIL TO NATURAL GAS IN MANY NON-UTILITY BURNERS AND UPGRADING OF LIGHT AND HEAVY OILS.

WE HAVE SET UP A WORKING GROUP OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL MINISTERS TO DEVELOP A SPECIFIC PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE ADDITIONAL 25% BY 1994.

A 50% REDUCTION WILL MEAN THAT TOTAL ANNUAL EMISSIONS OF SO₂ FROM THE EASTERN PART OF OUR COUNTRY AFTER 1994 WILL BE ABOUT 2.3 MILLION TONNES. THIS LEVEL OF EMISSIONS WILL MEAN THAT MANY AREAS OF CANADA WILL RECEIVE LESS THAN 20 KILOGRAMS OF WET SULPHATE PER HECTARE PER YEAR.

HOWEVER, EVEN IF CANADIAN SO₂ EMISSIONS WERE TO CEASE ALTOGETHER, WE COULD NOT PROTECT ALL SENSITIVE REGIONS IN CANADA - DEPOSITION WOULD STILL EXCEED 20 KG/HA/YR IN SOME AREAS. THIS DEMONSTRATES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF SO₂ FROM SOURCES BEYOND OUR BORDERS. MORE THAN 50% OF CANADA'S ACID RAIN PROBLEM ORIGINATES IN THE UNITED STATES. AT THE SAME TIME TEN TO FIFTEEN PERCENT OF THE ACID RAIN PROBLEM IN THE NORTHEASTERN USA COMES FROM CANADIAN EMISSIONS.

CANADA HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE U.S. SINCE 1978 TO RESOLVE THIS PARTICULAR TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION PROBLEM. IN 1980, WE AGREED ON A SET OF PRINCIPLES, WHICH HAVE BEEN USED BY OUR TWO COUNTRIES, IN THE FORM OF BOTH LAW AND CONVENTION, TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE BILATERAL AIR POLLUTION ISSUES. WE ALSO AGREED ON AND PUT TO WORK THE NEGOTIATING MACHINERY WHICH WOULD RESOLVE OUTSTANDING TECHNICAL QUESTIONS AND PRODUCE THE BILATERAL AGREEMENT TO REDUCE ACID-CAUSING EMISSIONS.

WE HAVE LONG RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR A JOINT SOLUTION. OUR LAKES, RIVERS, FORESTS AND WILDLIFE WILL RECOVER ONLY WHEN IT BECOMES A REALITY.

TODAY AND TOMORROW WE ARE MEETING IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A COMMON POSITION TO REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT AND TO INDICATE TO THE WORLD THAT WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF ELIMINATING THIS POISONOUS PROCESS THAT IS SLOWLY BUT SURELY DESTROYING THE RESOURCES ON WHICH WE DEPEND. THE INEVITABLE QUESTION, THEREFORE, IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US IF WE DO NOT STOP ACID RAIN?

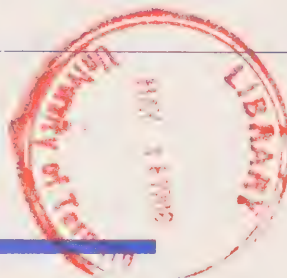
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Minister Environment Canada



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Speech Discours



Notes for an Address by

The Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.

Minister of the Environment

at a Cheque Presentation Ceremony

for the Restoration of the Winter Garden Theatre

Ontario Heritage Centre

Toronto, Ontario

26 April, 1988

(Aussi disponible en français)

Canada



Honoured guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, friends:

May I begin by saying how delighted I was to accept the opportunity, on behalf of the federal government, to present two cheques totalling \$3,250,000 to the Ontario Heritage Foundation to help restore the venerable and historic Winter Garden Theatre.

My colleague Flora MacDonald asked me to express her regrets that she was unable to attend today's ceremony. Her department, Communications and Culture, will contribute \$5 million in all to the project, \$3 million of which I will be presenting in a moment. The rest of the money, as they say in government, is in the mail!

For its part, Environment Canada is providing a further quarter of a million dollars. In addition to financial support, my department has given technical assistance to the project over the past three years.

The Winter Garden restoration project reflects the partnership the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario have forged in preserving Ontario's built heritage -- to enrich the lives not only of current generations but of generations to come as well. Only a few weeks ago, for example, my department joined the province and the Ontario Heritage Foundation in launching the restoration of the George Brown House here in Toronto.

The Winter Garden project had its beginnings in June 1982, when the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada decided the theatre was of national historic and architectural significance.

To qualify as nationally significant, the structure had to meet the rigorous standards of the Board, which advises the government, through the Minister of the Environment, on such matters. Upon the Board's advice, the federal government decided to give the Winter Garden Theatre the highest possible level of recognition -- not only by commemorating it with a plaque but also by putting hard cold cash on the table to restore the building. We were moved to do so because of the theatre's unique status as the only surviving-intact building in Canada created by Thomas Lamb, one of the world's pre-eminent "movie palace" architects.

The Winter Garden was designed to project the atmosphere of an English garden in full bloom, complete with a canopy of real leaves and cotton blossoms illuminated by leaded lanterns and a magical moon. The restoration will seek to re-create, with all its original splendour, one of the last remaining roof garden theatres in the world.

Although the theatre has sat idle for 60 years, the structure has, miraculously, suffered little damage.

In its heyday, the Winter Garden was Toronto's premiere location for special outings. Some of the most popular acts of the time -- including Sophie Tucker, Milton Berle, Burns and Allen, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy -- took curtain calls in the Winter Garden. My researchers tell me Wanda the Seal with the Human Brain also made a feature appearance there. But, coming as I do from the House of Commons, I find that fact rather mundane.

The decline of vaudeville and the advent of the talkies brought about the Winter Garden's decline and eventual closure in 1928 -- only 14 years after opening. Since then, the Winter Garden has rested, awaiting rebirth. Today, we are all midwives.

When fully restored, the building will be a showcase for the world's leading performing artists -- and, once again, a delightful place to come.

The value of the Winter Garden cannot be overstated. It is a memento of an era that will, alas, never return. Its beauty will be a source of pleasure for generations to come.

Mr. Chairman, allow me to conclude on this note. Canada's built heritage is our country's family album. It tells us where we've been, what we've done, and where we are. Nobody should throw

out a family album, for once gone it cannot be replaced. And the loss is more than something from the past: it is what gives meaning to the present and inspiration for the future.

In our country's family album, the Winter Garden Theatre leaps from the page as a very special reminder of the rich cultural heritage of this city, of this province and of this country.

On behalf of the Government of Canada and of heritage champions everywhere, I thank everyone connected with the Winter Garden Theatre for your strong commitment to its restoration.

It is my great pleasure now to present to Richard Alway, the Chairman of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, two Government of Canada cheques totalling \$3,250,000 to help restore the theatre to what it was always intended to be, a magnificent fixture in Canada's cultural life.



Speech Discours

Notes for an Address by

The Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment for Canada
to the Quadrangular Forum

Tuesday, 26 April, 1988

Inn on the Park Hotel
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

(Aussi disponible en français)



Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

May I begin by saying how delighted I was to be invited to address this, the 1988 Quadrangular Forum. As an international network of business, labour and government leaders, the Forum does much to influence the policies of North American, European and Japanese governments. I congratulate you for your progress in seeking an integrated perspective on the global economy.

My message to you all as Canada's Environment Minister is this: any view of world economic trends that ignores the sharply declining conditions of the natural environment around the globe is simply bad analysis and bad economics.

The intimate link between the environment and the economy, long ignored everywhere, is finally becoming a major factor in the decisions of government and industry alike. The very fact that a national environment minister has been invited to address this forum says a lot about how far we have all come in our thinking.

As the Honourable Mike Wilson, Canada's Finance Minister, said to you on Sunday night, two issues must dominate the upcoming Toronto Economic Summit -- exchange rates and trade imbalances. The Summit will probably not resolve those two issues, nor any of the other major ones to be discussed. But that meeting, like the 13 previous summits, will underscore how interdependent the national economies of the world really are and how great is the need for global co-operation.

Nowhere is global interdependence more evident, and global co-operation more urgently needed, than in the area of sustainable development. The World Commission on Environment and Development, headed by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Brundtland, defined sustainable development as economic activity that meets the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Expressed in purely economic terms, it is a matter of living off the Earth's interest without encroaching on its capital. What is more, the concept calls for the kinds of investments in the world's natural resource base that will ensure sustained dividends.

Let me make it clear that sustainable development is closer to hard-nosed economics than it is to environmental theology. In question is whether the world community will continue much longer to have the natural environmental base on which national and international economies depend.

One does not need to be a professional alarmist to be deeply concerned about the prospects. Indeed, at the current rate of environmental destruction, the long-term future of the world economy is at best uncertain and at worst dire.

If my assessment seems melodramatic or unduly apocalyptic, consider for a moment what we are doing to our forests -- typical of resource mismanagement around the globe.

This year alone, humanity will cut down 20 million hectares of forest -- a landmass nearly equivalent to the size of the United Kingdom. In Ethiopia, for example, forest cover has shrunk from 30% of the total country only 40 years ago to a mere 1% today. Throughout the tropics, where the problem is most severe, on average only one tree is planted for every 10 felled. In some cases, the ratio is three times as bad.

Set aside for a moment the purely environmental implications. We know they are severe: the eradication of forests removes a major regulator of oxygen balance in the atmosphere and an important control on global precipitation and moisture exchange. The point I want to emphasize, however, is not the effect on the environment but, rather, the profound impact on the economy throughout the world.

In the case of the less developed countries, timber is a major source of trade revenue, some \$7.5 billion a year. But, because the development of that industry there is not sustainable, its days are numbered. In fact, within the next 12 years, revenues are expected to plummet nearly 75% to \$2 billion.

Here in Canada, forestry is a \$30-billion-a-year industry that employs 300,000 people. Between 1975 and 1983, roughly 8,000 square kilometres of forests were harvested every year. Only a quarter of those trees were replanted, prompting my Cabinet colleague, Pat Carney -- herself a resource economist -- to accuse the country of creating "silvicultural slums." Indeed, this spring, the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association warned that large parts of the country risk running out of available pulpwood within the next five years -- and that in a country that symbolizes wilderness in the eyes of the rest of the world.

The need for sustainable development is as urgent in countries like Canada as it is in the less developed countries. Indeed, if anything, it is the industrialized countries that pose the greatest threat to the environmental base of the global economy. With only 20% of the Earth's population, we devour 80% of its energy, food, goods and natural resources. So, sound environmental practices in the industrialized world, based on the principle of sustainable development, would disproportionately benefit the global community.

I can think of few better places to start than agriculture. Here in Canada, for example, farmers lose over \$1 billion a year due to resource mismanagement. A major study by the Canadian Senate documented just how badly Canadian farmers are destroying the very soil that supports their industry.

At the heart of the problem, in Canada as in other countries, are agriculture-support programs that encourage farmers to overproduce, thereby forcing more from the land than it can naturally give. The OECD estimates that its member states alone spend \$100 billion a year on agricultural subsidies. The resulting surpluses, trade wars and depressed prices have almost ruined the industry.

Ladies and gentlemen, the key to stopping such insanity is at once simple and complex. It is simple because we know we cannot continue to treat the environment and the economy as two solitudes. It is complex because to secure our common economic future it will be necessary to make fundamental changes in the way we do business.

Albert Einstein once observed that the splitting of the atom changed everything except the world's mode of thinking. And thus, he said, we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, it seems our capacity to develop technology has always outpaced our ability to understand and cope with its negative consequences.

The principle of sustainable development requires us to anticipate the consequences and to prevent those that would compromise the future -- our own and that of our children and of children yet unborn.

Such has not been the ethic of the industrial revolution to date. Instead, immediate economic goals have been generally pursued without regard to the environmental costs, which invariably carry heavy economic costs as well. Humanity has embraced with a vengeance the pay later plan -- a react-and-cure approach that is as inefficient as it is avoidable.

Mr. Chairman, permit me to illustrate the colossal waste incurred when the economy and the environment are viewed in isolation rather than as inextricably linked.

Over the years, the government of Canada has poured tens of millions of dollars into the Sydney Steel Corporation in Nova Scotia. The technology used to produce steel in this case created an enormous lagoon of highly carcinogenic materials that constitute the largest chemical dumpsite in Eastern Canada. It is now costing the Canadian and Nova Scotia governments \$49 million to excavate and incinerate the mess -- the second biggest industrial site clean-up in the history of North America. Including the toll on human health, and the attendant drain of dollars from the health care system, the traditional approach has proven extremely costly. Surely, it would have made better economic and environmental sense to have prevented the problem in the first place.

Throughout North America, the single most serious environmental threat is acid rain. In Canada, that pollutant destroys thousands of lakes and rivers, kills whole fish populations, undermines tourism and agriculture, retards forest growth, erodes the built heritage and threatens human health. It's not only a monumental environmental problem; it is a major economic problem as well. The Canadian and provincial

governments and industry have launched a half-billion-dollar-a-year control program to slash sulphur dioxide emissions in half by 1994. We are also faced with spending another billion dollars a year on nitrogen oxide controls. Although expensive, our acid rain control program costs the country a fraction of what it would cost us to do nothing. But it would have been much cheaper still to have developed cleaner technologies at the outset.

The planet faces many such life-threatening environmental problems. None is more serious than the depletion of the stratospheric ozone -- that layer of gases around the Earth's surface that protects the human race and all other life forms from the most lethal of the sun's rays. The alarming rate at which that sunshield is thinning exposes fair-skinned people to greater risks of skin cancer and other diseases. What is more, it attacks the very food chain that sustains life itself.

Another environmental phenomenon, the greenhouse effect, will disrupt the international economy, if left unchecked. The build-up of carbon dioxide from fossil fuel burning, agriculture, and deforestation is preventing the escape of heat from the Earth's surface. As a result, the mean temperature of the planet will likely increase by up to 4.5 degrees centigrade within the next 45 years. A global change of that amount within such a short time will

alter precipitation patterns and vegetation zones throughout the world, with potentially disastrous economic consequences in some regions.

Such environmental conditions are not new -- though, clearly, they are getting worse. What is new is the world community's recognition that those conditions do not require us to accept a trade-off between a healthy environment and a sound economy. When the Club of Rome released its landmark report Limits to Growth almost two decades ago, that trade-off was deemed unavoidable.

The World Commission on Environment and Development explicitly rejected the no-growth option with as much conviction as it accepted the principle that the environment must be saved as an issue of urgent priority. It concluded that a new era of economic growth will be required to support the expected increases in global population. But that growth, the Commission said, must be based on the principle of sustainable development -- the total integration of economic and environmental decisions.

This was not the dogma of environmental ideologues. Rather, it was the consensus of a United Nations-sponsored commission of 22 world experts on economic and social issues, among them a prime minister, cabinet ministers, a judge, scientists and business leaders.

The Commission's Secretary-General was Jim MacNeill, now a key player in the Canadian policy research secretariat for this Quadrangular Forum. And the distinguished chairman of the Japanese delegation to the Quadrangular Forum, Dr. Saburo Okita, himself a former Foreign Minister, was a member of the Commission.

In 1980, at the summit meeting in Venice, Dr. Okita dramatized the fate of the world community if international co-operation is not achieved. "We are all," he said, "in the same gondola." Mr. Chairman, using a Canadian idiom, let me say, we are all in the same birchbark canoe.

When one country puts a hole in the canoe, all countries risk drowning. And yet, as far as the natural environment is concerned, every country is currently perforating the vessel.

What is needed is a marked change in the way all of us make decisions. Specifically, we must alter the traditional view of the economy and the environment. And I address my admonition to both economists and environmentalists -- indeed, to everyone. It makes no more sense to think of the environment as an obstacle to economic growth than it does to oppose economic growth as a tenet of environmental faith. The two -- the economy and the environment -- are fundamentally interlocked.

Since the turn of the century, the global economy has ballooned twenty-fold. In the same period, the population has doubled. Last July, it reached five billion people. In the next 45 years, the population is expected to top eight billion. And yet, the natural systems required to support life on this planet -- clean air, pure water and nourishing soil -- are fast deteriorating. The two trend lines, population growth and environmental degradation, are on a collision course.

The concept of sustainable development is aimed at avoiding that collision. It does not insist that the brakes be slammed on development. Indeed, it urges that development be accelerated, especially in those parts of the world now denied economic opportunity.

But sustainable development is economic growth of a very different sort from that which the world has sought in the past. Specifically, it is achieved by reducing sharply the energy and resource content of growth.

Japan is already demonstrating the potential of the strategy. Since 1973, that country has reduced by 60% the amount of energy and raw material required for each unit of industrial production. The results, in increased productivity and competitiveness, speak for themselves.

The Japanese experience demonstrates that sustainable development is, ultimately, a doctrine of enhanced macro-economic performance.

Canada itself is now committed to this new doctrine of growth. Initially, we are making structural and institutional changes recommended by a Canadian Task Force on Environment and Economy. I was a member of that Task Force, along with provincial environment ministers, environmentalists and academics. Most important of all, the Task Force included industry leaders like Roy Aitken, Executive Vice-President of the International Nickel Company Limited, David Buzzelli, President and Chief Executive Officer of Dow Chemical Canada Limited, Adam Zimmerman, Chief Executive Officer of Noranda Forest Incorporated, and David Morton, President of Alcan Aluminum Limited. Our report, which recommended that economic and environmental decisions be integrated throughout government and industry, was endorsed by Canada's Prime Minister and all ten provincial premiers in Toronto last November. The Prime Minister intends to raise the issue at the coming G-7 Summit.

A major vehicle for our national strategy will be Round Tables established by federal and provincial governments to advise them on sustainable development. The Round Tables will draw on the expertise of the public and private sectors, academe and the environmental community.

The overall objective is to put environmental responsibility where it belongs -- with the economic decision-makers of the country, including economic ministers and business leaders, whether they be foresters, farmers, small manufacturers, or the heads of multinational corporations.

World-wide, new institutions, and new mandates for existing ones, will be required. Fundamental changes are possible. The Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 demonstrated that leaders can make such changes when the political will is mustered. The institutions that emerged from that conference -- the IMF, the World Bank and GATT -- are now so much a part of the geo-political economic landscape it is hard to imagine the world without them. They need to be strengthened and updated to take on the challenge of sustainable development. The new President of the World Bank has already committed himself to the approach as a foundation of new World Bank policies. Others have done so as well.

Tomorrow is the first anniversary of the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. I hope, as you leave Toronto from this important Forum, you will carry forward the message of that report. Nothing less than the survival of the world economy, of the world environment and of the world itself is at stake.

Good luck with your valuable work. And thank you for
inviting me.

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Minister Environment Canada



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Speech Discours

An Address by

The Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.

Minister of the Environment for Canada

To the Annual Meeting of the Sierra Club

San Francisco, California

7 May, 1988

(Aussi disponible en français)

Canada



Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, friends.

May I begin by saying how delighted I was to accept the invitation to address this, the 1988 Annual Meeting of the Sierra Club.

I feel especially honoured to be here in San Francisco to accept from you the Edgar Wayburn Award. Dr. Wayburn's outstanding contribution to the environmental movement over many years is well known in Canada, as it is in the United States and, indeed, among environmentalists throughout the world.

I told my wife Kathy that I was to be the first non-American politician to receive the Wayburn Award. She was indelicate enough to suggest that, after eight such award presentations to date, your Club had probably run out of environmental politicians to honour here in the U.S.

But the award bears a distinguished name and I thank you for the honour. You can be sure it is received with equal measures of pride and appreciation.

We environmentalists have had a number of major triumphs in Canada. One in particular borders on the miraculous. I am referring to the decision by the Canadian and British Columbia governments to save Canada's most internationally significant wilderness treasure -- South Moresby.

The Sierra Club, both in Canada and the United States, played a major role in that cause. On behalf of all Canadians, I thank you most sincerely for your support. I will long remember the joy felt by those of us who walked the mossy carpet at Windy Bay following the government signing that sealed the deal. Peter McAlister of the B.C. Sierra Club was with me on that trip. He is here tonight, as are other Canadians and Americans who worked tirelessly to protect the islands. I wish to share the Wayburn Award, not only with Peter and other Canadian Sierra Club members, but also with everyone else who persevered throughout the 14-year battle to save "Canada's Galapagos." Among those heroes were the Haida Indians, who fought tenaciously to preserve their ancestral home against seemingly impossible odds.

Even as I speak, there are some who manoeuvre to exploit the park's natural resource wealth. I can assure you, they will not succeed.

In many ways, the struggle to save South Moresby continues the pioneering work of Sierra Club founder John Muir. Nearly one hundred years ago, he fought to preserve a spectacular wilderness area, Yosemite Valley.

But his cause was more than an effort to save any particular natural wonder. He understood profoundly the spiritual link between humanity and the rest of nature. In the case of South Moresby, thousands of Canadians who had never before joined an environmental cause became active. They did so because they knew instinctively that, when chainsaws threatened thousand-year-old trees, a part of themselves was under siege. That was the spirit of John Muir.

As humanity fast approaches the 21st century, environmental awareness around the world is rising. But the threats to planetary survival are now so awesome that more than awareness is needed. We must change fundamentally our relationship to this, the only world we are ever going to have. There is no place else to go.

The truth is, we are destroying the very systems in nature that support life itself -- the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the soil that produces our food. I am the father of two girls -- Kelly, almost four, and Rebecca, nearly two. The rate of destruction is now so rapid that we risk a total breakdown of the planet's support systems in the lifetime of Kelly and Rebecca's children.

Consider the following:

Tropical rainforests, which contain more than half of the known species of animals and plants on earth, help regulate oxygen balance in the atmosphere and control global precipitation and moisture exchange. So, they are more than trees, more than forests. They're vital to life itself.

At the turn of the century, almost all the tropical rainforests that existed at the time of Christ -- 6% of the earth's total land surface -- still flourished intact. In this century, we have destroyed half of those forests, and the pace of destruction is accelerating.

As it is, more than 27 million acres of tropical forest throughout the world are destroyed every year -- an area eight times the size of Connecticut.

The irony is that lush tropical rainforests grow on very infertile soils. Once destroyed, the forests cannot regenerate. The disaster created by desert conditions in areas like Ethiopia where forests once thrived should sound the alarm about the fate of Earth if we persist on our course.

The lungs of the planet are being ripped apart. And we in the industrialized world, thousands of miles from the offence itself, bear much of the responsibility.

After all, it is we who control the international monetary policies that have put Third World countries on a treadmill of environmental destruction from which they find it almost impossible to escape. There is something fundamentally wrong when the poorest countries on earth pay more money in interest payments to wealthy countries like Canada and the United States than they receive in aid from those same countries. And then they are compelled to destroy the resource base of their economies merely to survive in the short term.

The abject poverty and heavy debt load it breeds drive Third World nations into environmentally disastrous decisions that compound the economic crisis in which they find themselves. If the vicious circle is not cut, neither their economy nor their environment will last. For the Third World, poverty is pollution. And pollution is poverty.

Habitat destruction, hunting and felling world-wide are occurring at such a rapid rate they are fundamentally altering the ecological balance on the planet. Two trends should give us particular cause to worry.

First, both on land and in the oceans, the largest and most complex species of plants and animals -- the highest products of evolution -- are facing extinction. Among them are

the giant redwoods and sequoia trees of America; the grizzly bear of Canada; the condor of the Andes; the giant beech tree of Patagonia; the elephant, the mountain gorilla and the rhino of Africa; the blue whale of the southern oceans; the giant octopus, last seen in the Caribbean; and the giant panda of China.

The second trend to worry about is this: rapidly changing ecological conditions are accelerating the evolution of pests, parasites and viruses. The phenomenon is advancing to the point where opportunistic lower forms of life are becoming so dominant they are reducing the ability of higher forms of plants and animals to maintain productive habitat and, therefore, to survive.

This trend is compounded by the use of industrial chemicals and pesticides.

Ladies and gentlemen, humanity's modern ways will eradicate one million species of plants and animals in the next twelve years. In the same period, we will destroy all remaining wilderness in every temperate region of the globe, except that set aside in special reserves -- the ecological equivalent of museums. Set aside for the moment that the lily or gazelle or

tropical tree we annihilate today might well hold the secret to tomorrow's medical cure. Aren't we stripping the world of the very things that make this planet more than a place to serve time?

Bad enough that we are "skinning the planet alive," to use Richard St. Barbe Baker's eerie phrase. We are also choking it and drowning it.

Our appetite for energy and for chemically forcing more from the land than it can naturally give is changing the global climate. Carbon dioxide from fossil fuels and methane from modern agricultural practices are accumulating in the atmosphere and trapping solar energy reflected from earth. The result is an increase in surface temperature -- the so-called "greenhouse effect."

Scientists predict an average global warming of about four degrees centigrade within the next 45 years. A global change of four degrees within such a short time will alter precipitation patterns and vegetation zones throughout the world, with potentially disastrous consequences in some regions.

Of special interest to me is the growing threat to the stratospheric ozone -- that thin blanket of gases around the earth that shields the human race and other life forms from the most lethal of the sun's rays. Man-made chemicals, used in refrigeration, spray cans, fire extinguishers and industrial processes, are being released into the atmosphere in such heavy volumes they are trashing that protective shield. The incidence of skin cancer, leukemia, cataracts and other diseases is likely to increase while the world's capacity to produce food falls.

If the release of the offending gases is not curtailed sharply, the ozone shield may effectively disappear by the year 2040 -- within the lifetime of my own children. The global protocol on ozone forged in Montreal last September gives us all cause to hope that the world community will come to its senses. But, until the protocol is acted on, hope is all we have.

Another frightening but insidious thing we are doing to our planet is washing fertile soil into the sea. Intensive cropping, wetland drainage, slash-and-burn farming and over-grazing have dramatically increased soil erosion in our time. World erosion in the past five decades has been more than a hundred times that during the previous five centuries.

In Africa, for example, acacia trees commonly stand as high as five feet on their roots because soil has vanished from under them.

A macabre demonstration of Canadian and American environmental mismanagement underscores what a devastating effect we ourselves are having on nature. I refer to the beluga whales that wash up on the shores of the St. Lawrence estuary -- their carcasses so loaded with chemicals they are government-certified as hazardous waste sites.

The Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River system that provides the drinking water for millions of Americans and Canadians alike are the very waters in which those whales lived and perished.

What does that say about our own fate? It would be the height of arrogance for us to assume that we, the human species, are less vulnerable to environmental degradation than any other. We are inextricably linked to our environment. After all, we are what we eat, but also what we drink and breathe. That truth has long been recognized by our continent's aboriginal peoples. In 1853, Chief Seattle of the Dwamish Nation made this eloquent statement:

"Whatever befalls the Earth befalls the sons of Earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

And yet most of us think we can plunder the planet with impunity. When will we realize there is nothing intrinsically hospitable about planet Earth? Our planet does not support a rich and complex web of life because it is ideally suited for that purpose. It is ideally suited for that purpose because of the rich and complex web of life. Without the moderating effects of vegetation, of gas exchanges and of the recycling of materials conducted by billions of invertebrates, the planet Earth would be as unlikely a site for the Garden of Eden as the planet Mars.

An ancient Chinese proverb goes something like this: "If we don't change our course, we will end up where we are headed." Ladies and gentlemen, we do not want to be where we are headed.

One year ago last week, the United Nations released a landmark document -- the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. That Commission -- 22 world experts on economic and social issues, headed by Prime Minister Gro Brundtland of Norway -- pointed the world to a new course. It catalogued the dismal litany of humankind's abuse of the planet. But the Commission's report, entitled Our Common Future, is not despairing; it presents a message of hope. Simply stated, the Brundtland Commission argued that every nation must integrate environmental considerations into economic decisions. It called for accelerated economic development,

especially in the Third World, but in a way that respects the environment. Our Common Future envisions a new era of growth through what it calls "sustainable development."

The report recommends simultaneous action on a large number of fronts -- from education to energy to industrial development strategies through to international banking systems.

Clearly, the threats to planetary survival cannot be met within the borders of any one country. Nor can those threats be kept outside the borders of any country. Because the threats themselves are global, the response must be global as well. And yet a successful response will depend on the leadership of only a few countries -- the wealthy industrialized ones. The role of the United States, in particular, will be crucial. If this country assumes the leadership of which it is uniquely capable, by virtue of its wealth and technological advancement, the future will not necessarily be secure. But the odds in the risky game the world is playing with its own future will vastly improve.

The United States has an impact on the global environment well beyond either its population or its size. For instance, the U.S., with only 5% of the world's total population, devours a quarter of the world's fossil fuels. So, conservation measures in the U.S. would disproportionately benefit the world as a whole.

In the face of real or perceived threats from foreign powers and ideologies, the U.S. has marshalled enormous human and financial resources for national defence. This year, total military spending throughout the world in the name of national security is expected to reach one trillion dollars. The United States accounts for a third of it.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think humanity's concept of security needs to be fundamentally enlarged. As plants and animals disappear from the planet, as the ozone layer thins, as the ocean rises to flood fertile deltas and vital ports, as topsoil vanishes, and as humanity itself chokes on its own pollution, is a nuclear arsenal a guarantee of future security?

The challenge for all nations is to re-think our priorities. Specifically, we must understand that the greatest threat to survival is not military aggression but environmental degradation. As two of the biggest and wealthiest countries in the world, the United States and Canada can do much to help set the world on a genuinely secure course. If charity begins at home, environmental responsibility should begin there, too. For Americans and Canadians, home is our shared continent. Just as our mountain ranges and waterways and air currents inextricably mesh, so also must we act together to protect our common natural heritage and to secure our common future.

I can think of no better place for us to do so than the splendid wilderness lands home to 180,000 Porcupine Caribou in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. What will future generations think of us if we so little value such splendour that we allow it to be destroyed to feed our gluttonous appetite for oil and gas?

I know your Club's commitment to saving ANWR. The Government of Canada shares that commitment. Let us, together, redouble our efforts to ensure that sanity prevails.

For us in Canada, another critical environmental threat looms large on the agenda -- acid rain. In vast areas of both Canada and the United States, that insidious pollutant destroys lakes, kills fish, undermines tourism, retards forests, harms agriculture, devastates the built heritage, and threatens human health.

At long last, Canada has imposed stiff acid rain controls that will require government and industry alike to spend billions of dollars to slash sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions on a targetted and scheduled basis.

But our program, strict as it is, is not enough to save our natural and built environment without action on the U.S. side of our common border. That's because half the acid rain that wreaks havoc on the Canadian environment comes from the United States.

If two neighbours with such close historic ties cannot make progress on issues like ANWR and acid rain, what hope is there for progress on environmental issues among nations less bound by links of geography and friendship? Indeed, what hope is there for the future of the planet?

Will we Canadians and Americans abdicate leadership to others? Despite an appalling environmental record in the past, Japan for one is now applying the same steely resolve to environmental protection that it applies to putting Toyotas in our garages and Hitachis in our rec rooms.

Indeed, since 1973, that country has reduced by 60% the amount of energy and raw material required for each unit of industrial production.

Those on this continent who think that environmental action is a threat to the economy have a lesson to learn from Japan.

And yet it is the United States and Canada who are uniquely positioned to provide world leadership on the environment/economy partnership. Nature has been more generous to our two countries than to any others. And over and over again, we have proven that, at our best, we have the right stuff. For your part, when you Americans choose to rise to the challenge, you rise to the stars. You proved you can reach the moon. Can you now save the planet?

I firmly believe the answer is yes. But time is running out. It is not enough merely to ponder the warnings of the World Commission on Environment and Development. We must act. The cost will be large, the task difficult. But delay will lead to even greater costs and worse difficulties.

Let us -- Canadians and Americans together -- set an example for all humanity . . . to secure the future not only for ourselves and for our children but, indeed, for citizens of the world yet unborn.

The Sierra Club has a long and distinguished tradition of leadership. Indeed, ever since John Muir took Teddy Roosevelt camping in Yosemite, you have been leading the leaders. As one politician inspired by you, I thank you for your commitment, I congratulate you on your progress, and I wish you continued success.

Thank you.

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Publications

Minister Environment Canada



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Speech Discours

Notes for remarks by

The Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.

Federal Minister of the Environment

at the Signing of a Canada-Quebec
Convention on the
St. Lawrence River

Montreal, Quebec

3 June, 1988

(Aussi disponible en français)

Canada



Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Canadian government, I am delighted to sign the Canada-Quebec Convention on the St. Lawrence River with my federal colleague Robert de Cotret and my provincial counterparts Clifford Lincoln and Yvon Picotte. I think it is most appropriate that we are having this historic ceremony during Canada's Environment Week.

In April 1986, in Montreal, at the First Conference on Toxic Substances, I made a commitment to establish the St. Lawrence River as one of the Canadian government's top priorities. That commitment has now been honoured. Prime Minister Mulroney's announcement today bears witness to the will of the federal and provincial governments -- in partnership with industry, the private sector and universities -- to clean up and protect this magnificent river.

The St. Lawrence is one of the great waterways of the world. For Canadians and Quebecers, it has a special place in our history and in our hearts. Just as the St. Lawrence has served as the spine of commerce from the days of the fur trade to the establishment of major chemical and resource industries in modern times, it has also been a playground for the world and an inspiration to our artists and poets and philosophers.

Unfortunately, over the years, it has also become an open sewer -- one of the country's most heavily polluted waterways.

The goal of our collective efforts now is to restore the St. Lawrence to its former vitality so that, for Quebecers and Canadians as a whole, it will provide clean water, recreation and a healthy habitat for wildlife.

Since 1970, the St. Lawrence River has been the subject of countless environmental studies. It is now time to act.

For its part, the federal government will implement a vigorous action plan, focusing on the quality of the water, and of the broader environment, through toxic pollution control.

The plan includes conservation measures designed to protect endangered species and their sensitive environments. In that regard, one element of the Convention will authorize the federal government to negotiate an agreement to create a marine park at the confluence of the Saguenay and St. Lawrence rivers. Such an agreement will be based on wide public consultations.

A study to be released by my department in the coming weeks concludes that such a park is technically feasible. The project is a major priority of mine, for a marine park on the Saguenay would do much to protect the St. Lawrence River's beluga whale population, an endangered species.

The federal government also plans to clean up its own backyard by removing contaminated sediments from a number of national ports and from the Lachine Canal and by protecting significant wetlands along the river.

I take particular pride in the Prime Minister's announcement today regarding the creation of the Centre Saint-Laurent in the Montreal region. This centre will become an important vehicle for Environment Canada's enhanced work in Quebec.

The centre will conduct a wide range of activities associated with the St. Lawrence River Action Plan, including the development and application of industry-specific environmental technologies. It will operate in partnership with the provincial government, industry, the private sector and universities.

We all owe a big debt to the individual citizens and citizens' groups who fought long and hard for the kind of action plan we are launching today. As Canada's Minister of the Environment, I especially appreciate the leadership and commitment of: Daniel Green, of la Société pour vaincre la pollution; Harvey Mead of l'Union québécoise de la conservation de la nature; Bruce Walker of STOP; Dr. Leone Pippard, Leo Paul Quintal, Bruce McKay and other individual environmentalists and environmental groups for whom the St. Lawrence clean-up has been not only an issue but also a personal cause.

In closing, I emphasize how pleased I am with the happy outcome of two years of careful planning and discussions by myself and Clifford Lincoln and our respective colleagues. It reflects the strong commitment by the two governments to the St. Lawrence and to the natural environment as a whole. I look forward to the successful completion of our joint efforts in the interests of Quebecers and of all Canadians.

Office of the
Prime Minister



Cabinet du
Premier ministre

SPEAKING NOTES
FOR
PRIME MINISTER BRIAN MULRONEY

ADDRESSING

THE QUEBEC ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION

MONTREAL

JUNE 3, 1988

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

It is not often that I give a speech on a boat -- unless, of course, you count the Baie-Comeau-Matane or Tadoussac-Saint-Gédéon crossings many years ago.

The St. Lawrence was part of my horizon, as it has been for almost every Quebecer.

Our first acquaintance with history sprang from this river, which was used by the country's first inhabitants and carried the pioneers and explorers who chartered and built our continent.

Whether our ancestors paddled up the St. Lawrence in birchbark canoes, arrived on French sailing ships or else aboard immigrant boats, we can say of the St. Lawrence, "That's how we got here".

How many of us, as youngsters, would have thought that soon this great and beautiful river might forever be polluted? How many could have imagined then that someday we might no longer drink its water or eat its fish, that the birds and marine life which depend upon it might be poisoned to death?

And yet the St. Lawrence, this vital part of our ecological heritage, is now being threatened by years of carelessness.

Among the serious problems facing industrial society, none is more acute than the deterioration of our natural environment. And one of the most pressing responsibilities of modern governments is to stop this problem and work to restore the integrity of the environment. In Canada as elsewhere, we must act quickly to correct the mistakes of the past and repair the damage accumulated over the years.

Our government has resolutely tackled this immense and urgent task. We have made encouraging progress in many areas related to the environment.

For example, we have made it a matter of the utmost importance to immediately reduce and eventually eliminate the scourge of acid rain. I have made this a personal priority.

In the summer of 1985, Canada and some 20 member countries of the European Economic Council signed an agreement to reduce their sulphur dioxide emissions by 30 percent before 1993.

We reached a series of agreements with seven provinces on eliminating acid rain. This is the most intensive environmental protection program ever developed against acid rain -- it specifically calls for cutting sulphur dioxide emissions in half by 1994. Together with the Western provinces and Ontario, we are encouraging the use of less-polluting Western coal. Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are participating in various pilot projects to develop more efficient methods of burning coal.

In September 1987, stricter standards were adopted to reduce motor-vehicle emissions by 60 percent. Consequently, we have made significant progress in combatting acid rain, one of the most dangerous threats to our environment.

Yet clouds and winds cannot be contained by laws or borders. So until our neighbour, the United States, enacts laws and regulations as strict as ours for combatting acid rain, our forests, lakes and rivers will never be protected from this poison.

Our relations with the United States have improved considerably since September 1984. And because of our good relations, my discussions with President Reagan have been very frank and direct. This has been the case whenever we have met.

On each occasion, I strongly voiced Canadian concerns about the deterioration of our environment and stressed that we expect the United States to do its share in solving the problem of pollution reaching us from their side of the border.

The American response has been promising. President Reagan instructed his Secretary of State, George Shultz, to negotiate with External Affairs Minister Joe Clark on the basis of an eight point summary of what a bilateral treaty on acid rain must contain. I am confident an agreement can be reached.

We launched comprehensive trade negotiations with the United States and succeeded in reaching a Free Trade Agreement that will give both our countries new prosperity. I am convinced that with the same determination and good will, we can one day conclude an acid rain treaty.

Our government is fulfilling its responsibilities in the area of environmental protection.

In March 1986, for instance, we launched a program to eliminate lead in gasoline. And by 1990 lead emissions will be reduced by 60 percent and by 1992, virtually eliminated.

Last month, the House of Commons passed the Environmental Protection Act, the most comprehensive legislation of its kind ever adopted in Canada. This law controls toxics from production to disposal. We have established mechanisms to ensure that economic decisions take environmental impact into account.

We have reached an agreement with the provinces and territories on developing a coordinated approach for controlling the processing, transport and use of PCBs.

We have also given our national parks special attention by completely overhauling the National Parks Act -- the first major reform in this area since 1938. In less than four years, we have set aside more land for national parks than had been reserved in the previous decade.

In September 1987, the most important international diplomatic conference ever held on the

environment and the economy met here in Montreal. At this conference, organized by Canada, countries from around the world signed a historic protocol. It is aimed at cutting in half, by 1999, the chemical emissions destroying the stratosphere's ozone layer, the mantle of gas that shields us from harmful solar radiation. The Montreal Protocol is the most important world treaty on the atmosphere.

We have developed a new national water policy, improved the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement with the United States and signed an agreement to reduce pollution in the Niagara River. These and many other initiatives have been launched since September 1984 to protect our environment. In fact, our Government has spent more time, energy and money on the environment than any of our predecessors.

I am very proud of this, just as I am very proud of Environment Minister Tom McMillan, who was recently honoured for his leadership by the Sierra Club, one of the world's most respected environment protection organizations.

However, considering all we have yet to do as governments, private businesses, unions, recreational associations or individuals, it is far too early to think of victory.

Above all, we cannot afford to say, "Our environmental problems will soon be solved. Let's move on to other issues". To win this war, we have to press on with stubborn determination.

And the federal government is firmly resolved to squarely shoulder its responsibilities in this area. I am pleased to announce that our Environment Minister and the Quebec Environment Minister will sign today a cooperation agreement to rid the St. Lawrence River of pollution.

This represents our Government's most important environment initiative in the province of Quebec. Over the next five years, the federal

government will spend \$110 million on protection, conservation and restoration of the St. Lawrence's unique ecosystem.

Eighty percent of the population of Quebec lives along the banks of the River, which is the main source of drinking water for 50 percent of Quebecers.

Thus, the main phase of the comprehensive program announced today is aimed at protecting the river environment from toxic substances.

The most important phase of our action plan entails spending \$50 million on developing environmental technologies. A special institute, the St. Lawrence Centre, will be set up in the Montreal area to monitor the industrial development and application of these technologies.

The Centre's mandate will also include establishing a program to analyze and assess environmental conditions along the St. Lawrence. It will work in conjunction with the provinces, the private sector and universities.

Since pollution is a worldwide threat that comes in many forms, we must, at all costs, pool our energies and resources to secure a healthy environment.

Recently we were all shocked to learn of the contamination of beluga whales. These whales that wash up on the shores of the St. Lawrence estuary are so loaded with chemicals their carcasses are government-certified as hazardous waste sites. What a macabre demonstration of the devastating effect we are having on nature.

Another phase of our action plan for cleaning up the St. Lawrence calls for spending \$25 million to protect endangered species and sensitive areas. The two Ministers will soon sign a cooperation agreement to create a Marine Park at the mouth of the Saguenay. This Park will help protect the beluga pods in the

St. Lawrence. We have already announced that, by the end of June, we will unveil a special action plan to ensure the survival of the belugas.

A national wildlife reserve in the Montreal area and wildfowl habitats will also be established in cooperation with non-government organizations.

We will also clean up our own yard by restoring contaminated areas -- including national ports and the Lachine Canal -- and recovering marshlands. Twenty-one million dollars will be allocated for this purpose.

Another set of measures in the federal action plan calls for \$14 million to be spent on reducing toxic waste from industrial sources and evaluating foreign substances.

The federal government will mobilize all the resources at its disposal in this struggle to restore and protect our natural environment.

We want to give the St. Lawrence river back to all Canadians, with much of its original splendor restored. We want the river and its related systems to become a source of pride and enjoyment for Montrealers and their families. We want kids to swim and families to play and citizens to enjoy a clean and healthy environment -- with green spaces, clear water and fresh air, even in our major metropolitan areas.

Living in a big city does not mean accepting life in a diminished environment. Canada can do much better in its efforts to restore the quality of life in major urban areas, and we shall.

I know I can count on the cooperation of all Canadians who want their children and grandchildren to look at the St. Lawrence with the same pride as preceeding generations.

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Minister Environment Canada



Ministre Environnement Canada

Speech Discours

Notes for an Address by

The Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment for Canada

To the Sixth International Water Resources Association
World Congress

2 June, 1988

Ottawa Congress Centre

Ottawa, Canada

(Aussi disponible en français)

Canada



Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, friends.

May I begin by saying how delighted I am to address the closing banquet of this, the Sixth International Water Resources Association World Congress. It is the fourth day of Canada's national Environment Week, probably the most hectic seven days in the entire year for me and my department.

I am in the midst of a coast-to-coast tour -- participating in celebrations, announcements, signing ceremonies, plaque unveilings and many other activities sponsored by government, industry, universities and schools, and environmental and service groups. Having been on the road since Sunday, in a different part of the country every day, you'll forgive me if I have to remind myself where I am tonight. If it's Thursday, I guess it must be Ottawa! In that event, I welcome you to the National Capital and wish you all a happy Environment Week in our country.

The theme for Environment Week 1988 and the theme of your own Congress are remarkably similar. The Environment Week theme, "Our Common Future", was chosen to raise public awareness of the landmark report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission). That eminent group of policy makers and advisers from around the world identified

the myriad of inter-connected environmental and development threats to the planet's survival. They concluded that new economic growth must be radically different from that which has degraded the natural environment in the past -- counsel that was as simple as it was compelling. Your theme, "Water for World Development", makes the same environment-development link. Indeed, the Congress program is virtually a Brundtland Commission Report index. I congratulate you for your commitment to the concerns raised by Prime Minister Brundtland, by her fellow commissioners, and by others before them.

Water management issues, in particular, have profound implications for the future of the planet.

Water, in fact, is a remarkable substance. Although a simple compound, it shrouds two-thirds of the planet, caps the poles and pervades the air we breathe. It is the genesis and the continuing source of life. Without water, humankind -- indeed, all forms of life on Earth -- would perish.

Water, in greater or lesser amounts, is everywhere. Here in this country, we skate and ski on it, we sail over it and we fish in it. We use it to refresh our spirits, transport our goods and lure our tourists. We baptize our children in it, and dump our sewage into it. And, of course, we drink it to survive. When there is too little water, as in Western Canada at present, we suffer drought. When there is too much, we suffer floods.

Around the world, water quantity and quality are a matter of life and death. Consider these facts:

* During the 900 days of the Brundtland Commission's work, an estimated 60 million people, most of them children, died of water-related diseases, compounded by malnutrition.

* All the while, drought conditions in Africa became critical, starving 35 million people and killing more than a million.

* In the same period, a massive warehouse fire in Switzerland dumped agricultural chemicals, solvents and mercury into the Rhine River. In one fell swoop, millions of fish were wiped out and the drinking water for Germany and the Netherlands was jeopardized.

During any other comparable period these days, a similar litany of global disaster could be cited.

Traditional water problems of "too much or too little" -- droughts in one place, floods in another -- can no longer be dismissed as merely the mood swings of Mother Nature. Humankind itself, not nature alone, is accountable for much of the devastation inflicted on this, the only world we are ever going to have. For the first time in history, the human species is able to alter fundamentally the conditions of life on

the planet -- for better or for worse. In fact, human forces now equal natural forces. Through the burning of fossil fuels and the production of nuclear power, people spread more energy than the sun. Through agricultural mismanagement, people erode more soil than Nature herself. Through bad forestry practices, people eradicate more trees than fire, disease and pestilence combined.

In the case of water, we are destroying more than the planet can naturally replenish. The problem is compounded by the sheer amount of the resource we use. Annual demands for water around the globe have soared from 250 cubic metres for every person on earth only 90 years ago to over 700 cubic metres in the current year.

The rapid growth of world population compounds the problem of increased per capita consumption. Last year, the population reached five billion, having doubled since 1950. In the next twelve years, the world's population will top six billion. Even in the unlikely event per capita use of water remained constant, population growth will increase water use by 25%.

Already there is cause for alarm. Every year, the world withdraws about one-tenth of all the average flow in rivers -- the so-called renewable supply. And we withdraw about one quarter of that usually available in low-flow seasons -- the so-called stable supply.

By the year 2000, North Africa and the Middle East will require virtually 100% of all their usable freshwater supplies just to meet demand. The situation will be almost as bad in Eastern Europe and in large parts of Asia.

The irony is that some nations will be desperate for water while others will be flooded. Again, humanity has only itself to blame for much of the problem. The "greenhouse effect" from carbon dioxide build-up, for example, will contribute both to the drought and to the flooding.

Our interference with planetary systems has already increased the incidence and severity of so-called "natural disasters". Those disasters victimized twice as many people in the 1970s as they did in the previous decade. Most of the tragedy was inflicted by drought and flooding.

One of the most destructive forms of human interference in the global ecosystem is deforestation.

More than 20 million hectares of forest throughout the world are destroyed every year -- an area nearly as large as the United Kingdom.

The disaster created by desert conditions in areas like Ethiopia where forests once thrived should sound the alarm about the fate of Earth if we persist on our course.

While Canada has been spared the worst effects of nature's wrath provoked by human folly, we have no reason to be complacent. The drought now threatening to devastate our Prairie farm community demonstrates we will need to exercise wiser stewardship over the resources that have made the region a breadbasket for the world. The problem in this case is not only a lack of rain, though it has been a long, dry year. The heart of the matter is that the land has been farmed to the point where it is now incapable of holding what water there is.

We have removed hedgerows, drained wetlands, improperly rotated crops, and allowed overgrazing in an effort to force from the land more than it can naturally give. The day of reckoning has come: once-fertile landscape is becoming a dustbowl.

In Canada and around the world, government subsidies seduce farmers into overproducing. Canadian Prime Minister Mulroney has been raising the issue in the world's capitals because those policies are doing more than bankrupting national treasuries; they are helping to skin the planet alive.

The Prairie drought puts a lie to the myth that Canada is a water-rich country. With 7% of the world's landmass, we have 9% of its fresh water. So, we have just about our fair share. Even that apparent balance is misleading because most of our water flows northward, far from our major population centres.

And where our population is located, in a narrow ribbon along the U.S. border, our water supplies are becoming increasingly polluted.

To make matters worse, we Canadians are extravagant wasters of water. The average Canadian uses 288 litres of water a day -- twice as much as the average European. I have seen no evidence that we are any cleaner! Our government takes the issue so seriously that we have spent two years preparing the first-ever Federal Water Policy. The policy, among other things, addresses what is fundamentally wrong with the way Canadians handle their precious freshwater supplies -- fire-sale prices at the tap.

Only a few Canadians are now required to pay anything close to the actual cost of the water they use. It is, in fact, one of the most heavily government-subsidized products in the marketplace. Because water is underpriced, it is undervalued. Like any undervalued product, it is taken for granted and wasted.

All evidence shows that people use water the way they use any product -- from oil to sugar: the cheaper the price, the greater the waste. In Canadian communities where a more realistic pricing policy has been introduced, per capita water use has dropped by as much as 20 to 30%.

The Federal Water Policy calls on Canadians to do the fundamental thinking and planning we have been avoiding like a rash. In particular, the policy urges the country to adopt a rationalized pricing system that will, first, encourage people to conserve water; second, raise the funds needed to build and maintain better water systems; and third, encourage the kind of technological innovation that will improve both water quality and delivery, while cutting capital and operating costs.

Studies conducted in the 1970s demonstrated that using resources more efficiently is cheaper than securing new supplies. Since then, an astonishing array of energy- and water-saving technologies have hit the market, saving consumers and the public treasury alike tons of money and helping to save the environment to boot. All because public attitudes changed.

By the same token, the combination of new attitudes and new ways of doing things could be the answer to world water problems -- whether drought or flooding or pollution.

In particular, the word "efficiency" should be added to the word "conservation" as the new gospel of common sense.

We in the industrialized world cannot expect to alleviate poverty and environmental degradation in the developing world unless we change our own wasteful and destructive habits.

Indeed, with only 20% of the population, industrialized countries devour 80% of the world's total resources and produce most of its pollution. Just as charity begins at home, environmental responsibility should begin there too.

In the words of René Dubos, we must "think globally, but act locally".

Each country must take up the challenge -- of Dubos, of Brundtland, and of common sense -- to act locally. At the same time, international co-operation will be vital to ensure that action in one country reinforces that in another.

In the year since the Brundtland Report was released, there have been impressive examples of global co-operation. The Montreal Protocol to protect the ozone layer is the most impressive of all. I say that for two reasons.

First, never before had the global community heeded the warnings of science in advance of an environmental catastrophe, acted on those warnings through a formal international agreement, and committed itself to still further action as science continues to point the way.

Secondly, it was the first time the world community had broken through the barrier of complex economic and marketing vested interests to reach an environmental protection accord on

a global scale acceptable to the industrialized world and to the developing world, to the Western industrialized countries and to the East Bloc.

The Montreal Protocol demonstrated that, when common sense is combined with political will, it is possible to improve the odds in the risky game the world is playing with its own future. The protocol holds out the promise of protecting our planetary atmosphere as a global commons. And it could serve as a model for other areas, including water resources. Everyone lives in the same oxygen tent. When the tent is punctured by one country, no country is spared.

The Government of Canada wants the nations of the world to build on the Montreal Protocol to create an International Law of the Atmosphere. In pursuit of that objective, Canada will host a major international conference later this month in Toronto.

It will assemble scientists, politicians, environmentalists, industrialists, academics and others from around the world to grapple with everything from ozone depletion to acid rain to the greenhouse effect to Arctic haze right through to survival itself.

Even as we arrange to ratify the Montreal Protocol, we learn that ozone depletion is worse than we thought as recently as last September when it was forged. The Protocol would achieve a 50% cut in ozone-depleting substances by 1998.

Scientists now tell us that an 85% cut is necessary. I am happy to confirm today that Canada is committed to cutting its ozone-depleting substances in excess of requirements under the Protocol.

Accordingly, I intend to advance regulations to ban all non-essential uses of chlorofluorocarbons and halons. The government will develop, in co-operation with industry, codes of practice, emission controls, recapture and recycling requirements, and mandatory labelling.

The Canadian Parliament has already unanimously passed a tough new pollution-control law that, among other things, will give the government the authority to implement the Montreal Protocol. The legislation awaits only Senate approval and Royal Assent before becoming law.

I am pleased to confirm, as well, that the government will then ratify the agreement without a moment's delay.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to conclude on this note. Prime Minister Brundtland was recently asked what she thought was the single most important word in her Commission's report. Her answer, like herself, was as direct as it was wise. The most important word in the report, she said, is "now". "We must act now."

Surely, that is also the message that all of you should take away from this important Congress. Through your discussions here in Ottawa, you have provided profound insights into both the problems and the solutions. Let us get on with the job. And, in the words of Madam Brundtland, let us act -- now.

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Minister Environment Canada



Ministre Environnement Canada

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Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Canadian government, I am delighted to sign the Canada-Quebec Convention on the St. Lawrence River with my federal colleague Robert de Cotret and my provincial counterparts Clifford Lincoln and Yvon Picotte. I think it is most appropriate that we are having this historic ceremony during Canada's Environment Week.

In April 1986, in Montreal, at the First Conference on Toxic Substances, I made a commitment to establish the St. Lawrence River as one of the Canadian government's top priorities. That commitment has now been honoured. Prime Minister Mulroney's announcement today bears witness to the will of the federal and provincial governments -- in partnership with industry, the private sector and universities -- to clean up and protect this magnificent river.

The St. Lawrence is one of the great waterways of the world. For Canadians and Quebecers, it has a special place in our history and in our hearts. Just as the St. Lawrence has served as the spine of commerce from the days of the fur trade to the establishment of major chemical and resource industries in modern times, it has also been a playground for the world and an inspiration to our artists and poets and philosophers.

Unfortunately, over the years, it has also become an open sewer -- one of the country's most heavily polluted waterways.

The goal of our collective efforts now is to restore the St. Lawrence to its former vitality so that, for Quebecers and Canadians as a whole, it will provide clean water, recreation and a healthy habitat for wildlife.

Since 1970, the St. Lawrence River has been the subject of countless environmental studies. It is now time to act.

For its part, the federal government will implement a vigorous action plan, focusing on the quality of the water, and of the broader environment, through toxic pollution control.

The plan includes conservation measures designed to protect endangered species and their sensitive environments. In that regard, one element of the Convention will authorize the federal government to negotiate an agreement to create a marine park at the confluence of the Saguenay and St. Lawrence rivers. Such an agreement will be based on wide public consultations.

A study to be released by my department in the coming weeks concludes that such a park is technically feasible. The project is a major priority of mine, for a marine park on the Saguenay would do much to protect the St. Lawrence River's beluga whale population, an endangered species.

The federal government also plans to clean up its own back yard by removing contaminated sediments from a number of national ports and from the Lachine Canal and by protecting significant wetlands along the river.

I take particular pride in the Prime Minister's announcement today regarding the creation of the Centre Saint-Laurent in the Montreal region. This centre will become an important vehicle for Environment Canada's enhanced work in Quebec.

The centre will conduct a wide range of activities associated with the St. Lawrence River Action Plan, including the development and application of industry-specific environmental technologies. It will operate in partnership with the provincial government, industry, the private sector and universities.

We all owe a big debt to the individual citizens and citizens' groups who fought long and hard for the kind of action plan we are launching today. As Canada's Minister of the Environment, I especially appreciate the leadership and commitment of: Daniel Green, of la Société pour vaincre la pollution; Harvey Mead of l'Union québécoise de la conservation de la nature; Bruce Walker of STOP; Dr. Leone Pippard, Leo Paul Quintal, Bruce McKay and other individual environmentalists and environmental groups for whom the St. Lawrence clean-up has been not only an issue but also a personal cause.

In closing, I emphasize how pleased I am with the happy outcome of two years of careful planning and discussions by myself and Clifford Lincoln and our respective colleagues. It reflects the strong commitment by the two governments to the St. Lawrence and to the natural environment as a whole. I look forward to the successful completion of our joint efforts in the interests of Quebecers and of all Canadians.

Office of the
Prime Minister



Cabinet du
Premier ministre

CANADA

SPEAKING NOTES

FOR

PRIME MINISTER BRIAN MULRONEY

ADDRESSING

THE QUEBEC ENVIRONMENT FOUNDATION

MONTREAL

JUNE 3, 1988

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

It is not often that I give a speech on a boat -- unless, of course, you count the Baie-Comeau-Matane or Tadoussac-Saint-Gédéon crossings many years ago.

The St. Lawrence was part of my horizon, as it has been for almost every Quebecer.

Our first acquaintance with history sprang from this river, which was used by the country's first inhabitants and carried the pioneers and explorers who chartered and built our continent.

Whether our ancestors paddled up the St. Lawrence in birchbark canoes, arrived on French sailing ships or else aboard immigrant boats, we can say of the St. Lawrence, "That's how we got here".

How many of us, as youngsters, would have thought that soon this great and beautiful river might forever be polluted? How many could have imagined then that someday we might no longer drink its water or eat its fish, that the birds and marine life which depend upon it might be poisoned to death?

And yet the St. Lawrence, this vital part of our ecological heritage, is now being threatened by years of carelessness.

Among the serious problems facing industrial society, none is more acute than the deterioration of our natural environment. And one of the most pressing responsibilities of modern governments is to stop this problem and work to restore the integrity of the environment. In Canada as elsewhere, we must act quickly to correct the mistakes of the past and repair the damage accumulated over the years.

Our government has resolutely tackled this immense and urgent task. We have made encouraging progress in many areas related to the environment.

For example, we have made it a matter of the utmost importance to immediately reduce and eventually eliminate the scourge of acid rain. I have made this a personal priority.

In the summer of 1985, Canada and some 20 member countries of the European Economic Council signed an agreement to reduce their sulphur dioxide emissions by 30 percent before 1993.

We reached a series of agreements with seven provinces on eliminating acid rain. This is the most intensive environmental protection program ever developed against acid rain -- it specifically calls for cutting sulphur dioxide emissions in half by 1994. Together with the Western provinces and Ontario, we are encouraging the use of less-polluting Western coal. Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are participating in various pilot projects to develop more efficient methods of burning coal.

In September 1987, stricter standards were adopted to reduce motor-vehicle emissions by 60 percent. Consequently, we have made significant progress in combatting acid rain, one of the most dangerous threats to our environment.

Yet clouds and winds cannot be contained by laws or borders. So until our neighbour, the United States, enacts laws and regulations as strict as ours for combatting acid rain, our forests, lakes and rivers will never be protected from this poison.

Our relations with the United States have improved considerably since September 1984. And because of our good relations, my discussions with President Reagan have been very frank and direct. This has been the case whenever we have met.

On each occasion, I strongly voiced Canadian concerns about the deterioration of our environment and stressed that we expect the United States to do its share in solving the problem of pollution reaching us from their side of the border.

The American response has been promising. President Reagan instructed his Secretary of State, George Shultz, to negotiate with External Affairs Minister Joe Clark on the basis of an eight point summary of what a bilateral treaty on acid rain must contain. I am confident an agreement can be reached.

We launched comprehensive trade negotiations with the United States and succeeded in reaching a Free Trade Agreement that will give both our countries new prosperity. I am convinced that with the same determination and good will, we can one day conclude an acid rain treaty.

Our government is fulfilling its responsibilities in the area of environmental protection.

In March 1986, for instance, we launched a program to eliminate lead in gasoline. And by 1990 lead emissions will be reduced by 60 percent and by 1992, virtually eliminated.

Last month, the House of Commons passed the Environmental Protection Act, the most comprehensive legislation of its kind ever adopted in Canada. This law controls toxics from production to disposal. We have established mechanisms to ensure that economic decisions take environmental impact into account.

We have reached an agreement with the provinces and territories on developing a coordinated approach for controlling the processing, transport and use of PCBs.

We have also given our national parks special attention by completely overhauling the National Parks Act -- the first major reform in this area since 1938. In less than four years, we have set aside more land for national parks than had been reserved in the previous decade.

In September 1987, the most important international diplomatic conference ever held on the

environment and the economy met here in Montreal. At this conference, organized by Canada, countries from around the world signed a historic protocol. It is aimed at cutting in half, by 1999, the chemical emissions destroying the stratosphere's ozone layer, the mantle of gas that shields us from harmful solar radiation. The Montreal Protocol is the most important world treaty on the atmosphere.

We have developed a new national water policy, improved the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement with the United States and signed an agreement to reduce pollution in the Niagara River. These and many other initiatives have been launched since September 1984 to protect our environment. In fact, our Government has spent more time, energy and money on the environment than any of our predecessors.

I am very proud of this, just as I am very proud of Environment Minister Tom McMillan, who was recently honoured for his leadership by the Sierra Club, one of the world's most respected environment protection organizations.

However, considering all we have yet to do as governments, private businesses, unions, recreational associations or individuals, it is far too early to think of victory.

Above all, we cannot afford to say, "Our environmental problems will soon be solved. Let's move on to other issues". To win this war, we have to press on with stubborn determination.

And the federal government is firmly resolved to squarely shoulder its responsibilities in this area. I am pleased to announce that our Environment Minister and the Quebec Environment Minister will sign today a cooperation agreement to rid the St. Lawrence River of pollution.

This represents our Government's most important environment initiative in the province of Quebec. Over the next five years, the federal

government will spend \$110 million on protection, conservation and restoration of the St. Lawrence's unique ecosystem.

Eighty percent of the population of Quebec lives along the banks of the River, which is the main source of drinking water for 50 percent of Quebecers.

Thus, the main phase of the comprehensive program announced today is aimed at protecting the river environment from toxic substances.

The most important phase of our action plan entails spending \$50 million on developing environmental technologies. A special institute, the St. Lawrence Centre, will be set up in the Montreal area to monitor the industrial development and application of these technologies.

The Centre's mandate will also include establishing a program to analyze and assess environmental conditions along the St. Lawrence. It will work in conjunction with the provinces, the private sector and universities.

Since pollution is a worldwide threat that comes in many forms, we must, at all costs, pool our energies and resources to secure a healthy environment.

Recently we were all shocked to learn of the contamination of beluga whales. These whales that wash up on the shores of the St. Lawrence estuary are so loaded with chemicals their carcasses are government-certified as hazardous waste sites. What a macabre demonstration of the devastating effect we are having on nature.

Another phase of our action plan for cleaning up the St. Lawrence calls for spending \$25 million to protect endangered species and sensitive areas. The two Ministers will soon sign a cooperation agreement to create a Marine Park at the mouth of the Saguenay. This Park will help protect the beluga pods in the

St. Lawrence. We have already announced that, by the end of June, we will unveil a special action plan to ensure the survival of the belugas.

A national wildlife reserve in the Montreal area and wildfowl habitats will also be established in cooperation with non-government organizations.

We will also clean up our own yard by restoring contaminated areas -- including national ports and the Lachine Canal -- and recovering marshlands. Twenty-one million dollars will be allocated for this purpose.

Another set of measures in the federal action plan calls for \$14 million to be spent on reducing toxic waste from industrial sources and evaluating foreign substances.

The federal government will mobilize all the resources at its disposal in this struggle to restore and protect our natural environment.

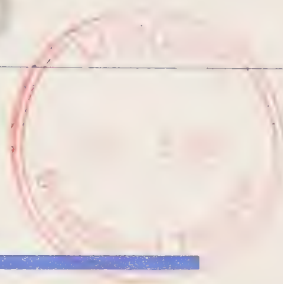
We want to give the St. Lawrence river back to all Canadians, with much of its original splendor restored. We want the river and its related systems to become a source of pride and enjoyment for Montrealers and their families. We want kids to swim and families to play and citizens to enjoy a clean and healthy environment -- with green spaces, clear water and fresh air, even in our major metropolitan areas.

Living in a big city does not mean accepting life in a diminished environment. Canada can do much better in its efforts to restore the quality of life in major urban areas, and we shall.

I know I can count on the cooperation of all Canadians who want their children and grandchildren to look at the St. Lawrence with the same pride as preceeding generations.



Speech Discours



Notes for Remarks by

the Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.

Minister of the Environment for Canada

at the Press Conference to Announce

Details of the Environmentally Friendly

Goods Campaign

Toronto, Ontario

27 June, 1988

(Aussi disponible en français)



Ladies and gentlemen,

As the Prime Minister announced this morning, our government is responding to consumer demand for information on how individuals can help protect the natural environment. Specifically, we plan to initiate a vetting and labelling system for "environmentally friendly" products and processes.

Public opinion surveys confirm what everyone already knows: 94 per cent of Canadians believe we all must take personal responsibility if planetary survival is to be secured. But consumers can act only when they are well informed. Surveys show that Canadians are prepared to pay more for "environmentally friendly" products -- up to 10 per cent more. But they must be able to identify those products.

Any such initiative must include government, trade unions, the private sector, the environmental and academic communities and, above all, Canadian consumers. But it must not be dominated by any one of them, least of all government. The process by which individual products and processes obtain an environmental "seal of approval" must be totally independent of influence from any vested interest.

Accordingly, the Government of Canada will launch an arms-length review of products and processes in the marketplace, conducted by a blue-ribbon panel of Canadians, to determine which ones merit an "environmentally friendly" label.

Government has a crucial role in both regulating and enforcing environmental standards. But laws alone cannot secure our environmental future. Environmental awareness must be an integral part of our culture. Laws and such awareness go hand in hand. In this case, the government will use the soon-to-be-proclaimed Canadian Environmental Protection Act to establish, in consultation with Canada's provinces, the environmentally friendly products and processes panel.

The purpose is to empower consumers to make rational decisions. A competition will be held to select a logo to identify readily for consumers environmentally friendly goods and services in supermarkets, department stores, confectionaries -- indeed, everywhere in the retail sector.

Good environmental practice is good business. Already, this campaign is being enthusiastically supported by private-sector leaders and Canada's environmental community.

Allow me to stress a few points.

First, we intend to launch the project immediately.

Second, in consultation with a multi-sectoral group of advisors, Environment Canada will announce details of the process next month and the blue-ribbon panel will be in place this fall.

Third, the initiative will be fully operational in January 1989. By then, Canadian consumers will be able to identify instantly "environmentally friendly" items. Clearly, the initiative needs a kick-start. The government will provide it both financially and administratively. Ultimately, the system will be self-sustaining. Applicants for the seals of approval will pay fees even to have their products and processes evaluated, let alone labelled. Such an approach has proven highly successful in West Germany, and our much more ambitious plan should be no less self-sufficient.

We already know from the private sector that manufacturers, producers, packagers and retailers are eager to support this campaign. It is in their commercial interests to do so. No-one wants to be on the wrong side of the struggle to secure, in Madam Brundtland's words, "our common future."

In fact, many private-sector parties have already made impressive strides in that direction. Some of them are with me today. Thanks to pressure from non-government environmental groups and industry leadership, Canada enjoys a world-wide reputation in this area. Bio-degradable garbage bags, plastic foam packaging that does not degrade the ozone layer, and many other examples, could be cited.

Let me introduce some of the industry leaders who are active in the campaign.

Tim Carter is vice-president of the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors and affiliated with the Retail Council of Canada, representing all of Canada's major retailers both in the grocery and department store trades.

Ian Gray is president of St. Lawrence Starch, which, through its "Eco-Star" subsidiary, holds world patents on bio-degradable processes for plastic films. "Eco-Star" representative Wayne Mattever is here as well.

Bob Latimer, an executive of "Dyne-a-pak," is also supporting the program. His company makes foam trays for meat and poultry and is committed to producing products without ozone-depleting chemicals.

Roger Keeley of Atlantic Packaging has told me his firm, the largest Canadian recyclers of corrugated cardboard, is about to develop a "de-inking" recycling plant. It is now making bio-degradable plastic bags and will soon begin to manufacture bio-degradable diapers.

Tony Wilshaw is president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, already on record as supporting these initiatives.

George Bothwell is director of Corporate Affairs, Coca-Cola Limited (Canada). His firm is the single largest contributor to Canada's "curbside" recycling program with a contribution of \$12 million over the last four years.

Roots Canada, major retailers of recreational clothing, were unable to be with us today. They have, however, sent news releases today to announce that they are now testing bio-degradable garbage bags for all their retail outlets, as well as bio-degradable shopping bags for all of their customers. To mark this conference, Roots has produced a special t-shirt, the profits from which will be devoted to the preservation of tropical rainforests.

I note that Julia Langer, executive director of Friends of the Earth Canada, is here today. Her group and its member organizations around the world have strongly promoted the action we have taken today.

I pay tribute to her group and to everyone associated with this pioneering environmental project. On behalf of the Government of Canada, I express full support for it and look forward to working with industry and environmentalists to make it a huge success.



Speech Discours

"The Halifax Harbour"

Notes for remarks by

The Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.,
Minister of the Environment for Canada

at a Press Conference to Announce
a Demonstration System of Canada's
Fuel-from-Sludge Technology at the
Halifax Harbour

Tuesday, 26 July, 1988

Halifax, Nova Scotia

(Aussi disponible en français)



Federal and provincial colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to take part in this federal-provincial ceremony to launch a \$195.7-million project to construct a treatment system that will demonstrate Canada's pioneering oil-from-sludge technology. As Canada's Environment Minister, I am especially glad that a major spinoff of the project will be to cleanse the Halifax Harbour, one of the most severely polluted waterways in eastern Canada. It will end over 240 years of uncontrolled raw sewage discharge into the Harbour.

The project will dramatically strengthen Canada's capacity to corner the market in an increasingly lucrative field -- environmental technology. Potential sales are estimated in the hundreds of millions of dollars worldwide. What we are inaugurating in Halifax today will boost Canadian efforts to become an international leader in this exciting area.

For six years now, at Environment Canada's Wastewater Technology Centre in Burlington, Ontario, federal government researchers and engineers have been developing technology to convert municipal sewage sludge into a synthetic fuel. My department now holds valuable patent rights on the process.

Pilot studies have shown that the production of oil-from-sludge -- affectionately referred to in my office as "petro-poop" -- is technically and economically sound. To demonstrate that the process makes commercial sense, we now need to take the idea out of the laboratory and apply it to a real problem. Specifically, we need to construct, operate and demonstrate the system as a showcase for Canadian innovation.

Because the technology works best when supplied with untreated (or primary) sludge, Halifax was thought to be an ideal site to demonstrate it commercially.

To appreciate the potential of this work, consider the following:

- * Canada, the U.S. and Europe spend billions of dollars a year on sludge disposal, and those expenditures are expected to double in the next 10 years.

- * Sludge disposal accounts for as much as 50 per cent of a municipality's cost of operating wastewater treatment plants.

- * New York, New Jersey and Boston have pledged to stop dumping untreated sludge into the Atlantic by the early 1990s. They are looking for our kind of technology to enable them to change course. Japanese cities are also searching for better ways to handle their sewage.

Oil-from-sludge plants are themselves powered by the fuel they generate. So, operating costs are a fraction of those associated with alternative systems. What is more, the new system mitigates the need for capital-intensive waste disposal incinerators, which can cause pollution problems far worse than those they are designed to address. And our new system does not require extensive landfill sites -- a real boon to cities where land is at a premium.

Indeed, the oil-from-sludge demonstration project has the potential to revolutionize the way municipalities around the world cope with their burgeoning waste. In one fell swoop, the technology advances pollution control, energy conservation, better land management and economic goals.

The opportunities right here in Canada underscore the potential elsewhere throughout the world. Half a million tonnes of sewage sludge are produced across the country each year. Some 70 per cent could be converted to about 700,000 barrels of oil, worth roughly \$20 million annually. Such conversion would eliminate the difficult task of disposing of 350,000 tonnes of sludge in an environmentally acceptable manner, saving cities hundreds of millions of dollars. The number of other community priorities that could be funded with the savings -- day care, welfare programs, community centres, public housing -- is staggering.

Through this technology, the federal government is investing in the future not only of Canadians but of the world community. The system to be demonstrated in Halifax will help make the planet as a whole a healthier and more secure place to live.

"Our Common Future", the title of the landmark report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission), urged people everywhere to view environmental factors as an integral part of the economy, and not as an afterthought or add-on. The project we are announcing practises the Brundtland ethic by integrating environmental and economic planning.

It is a little-known fact that Canada's environmental industry sector, though not yet large, is establishing strong roots in the economy of the country. That sector now employs more than 100,000 people directly and an additional 50,000 indirectly. The potential for further growth is restricted only by our ambition, our ingenuity and our commitment -- certainly not by the marketplace.

In no other policy area will laws become tougher than in the environmental field. At a time when the trend is towards deregulation almost everywhere else, governments are moving in

the opposite direction in the environmental field. Industry will sorely need the technology to meet steadily stiffer control measures. Such measures will be at once a burden and an opportunity for the private sector -- a burden because it will be an inescapable cost of doing business; an opportunity because it will open up tremendous avenues for domestic and foreign sales alike.

The question for Canadians is this: are we going to sit on the sidelines while other countries develop the technologies and then sell them to us? Or, will we seize the opportunity and secure our leadership in this field of the future?

Today, in Halifax, we are choosing the latter course.

This project will link and mobilize the capabilities of government and industry, thereby symbolizing the economy-environment partnership so vital to planetary survival.

The Canadian government and the government of Nova Scotia are today demonstrating their commitment to that partnership. Our common commitment to first-rate scientific research, to innovative technologies, and to environmental protection is both symbolized and accelerated by this important effort.

As Canada's Minister of the Environment, whose department is proud to be involved in the project, I congratulate and thank all concerned for their leadership.

I pay special tribute to my federal colleague Stu McInnes and to Premier John Buchanan. Stu's heavy lobbying within the federal Cabinet and the Premier's influence on us all have done much to make today's signing happen. I am delighted that such world-class environmental technology is being demonstrated in this, their capital city and home province.

Mr. Chairman, allow me to conclude on this note.

My good friend Mayor Ron Wallace once threatened to block me at the Airport from entering his city.

He said that, every full moon, Tom McMillan comes to town and bays like a dog about the Halifax Harbour.

Sir, officials of my department's Weather Service advise that, as we launch the Halifax Harbour project this afternoon, the moon is nearly full.

Mr. Mayor, every dog has his day.



Speech Discours

"Canadian Water Exports --
the Myth and the Facts"

Notes for address by
the Honourable Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.,
Minister of the Environment

at the 1988 Biennial Meeting,
Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario

Westin Hotel
Ottawa

25 August, 1988

(Aussi disponible en français)



May I begin by saying how delighted I am to address this, the 21st biennial conference of the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario.

It was my pleasure to speak at your 17th conference, in Trenton in 1980, on acid rain, when I was Environment Critic for my party in Opposition. I am not sure whether you have invited me back because you were so impressed with my brilliant performance on that occasion or whether, after eight years, everybody has now forgotten how dreadful I was. In any event, thank you for the opportunity to top myself or redeem my reputation -- whichever is the case.

Today, I wish to speak to you candidly about an issue that has been the subject of entirely too much emotion and too little reason -- water exports.

This subject has inspired more nonsense from more commentators than any other Canadian environmental question since I was first elected to Parliament almost a decade ago.

Most of that nonsense has come from free trade opponents. They would have us believe that the Canada-U.S. Agreement is a diabolical plot to funnel to the U.S. every last ounce of Canadian fresh water -- whether from the Mackenzie Delta, the Great Lakes, the St. John River, Lake Winnipeg or, God forbid!, Little Pond in my home province of Prince Edward Island.

Opposition MPs have wrapped the Canadian flag so tightly around themselves on the issue, they risk suffocating. Certainly, they have suffocated their capacity to see in the Free Trade Agreement anything but evidence for the most outlandish conspiracy theories.

Mr. Chairman, as an environmentalist, who is also an unabashed nationalist, allow me to make four points by way of setting the record straight.

First, water diversions and large-scale water exports were never part of the negotiations that led to the free trade agreement. The FTA has nothing to do with water diversions or large-scale water exports -- full stop.

Second, Canada's water is not for sale. The government is opposed to large-scale water exports, will not approve them, and is in no way obliged to sell the country's water to Americans or to anyone else.

Third, the very idea of large-scale water exports is fundamentally flawed -- not only environmentally but also economically. Simply put, the sheer cost of getting Canadian water to market would require champagne consumer prices merely to recover the investment, let alone turn a profit. The marketplace itself would crush any large-scale water export plan every bit as hard as the Canadian public. In either case, it would not survive beyond the drawing board. Nor would any politician who sanctioned water exports survive the ballot box.

Finally, Canada has never been formally approached by any jurisdiction in the United States concerning the purchase or large-scale export of water by diversion. Despite drought in that country from time to time, the U.S. -- myth to the contrary -- is not breaking down the door for our water.

The Rawson Academy, much quoted nowadays, claims that, over the last 20 years, there have been nine multi-billion dollar proposals to divert Canadian waters to the United States, the inference being those were formally sanctioned by the U.S. government. In fact, they were nothing more than half-baked notions by private interests in both Canada and the U.S., and none of the proposals was seriously considered by either national government.

Seen in that light, let's call a spade a spade: most politicians who rail against the water-export phantom are doing so not to protect Canadian water but to spook the public about free trade. Canadians need not be spooked by trade with the Americans.

Indeed, Canada and the U.S. are not only one another's largest trading partners but also the two largest trading partners anywhere in the world. Our own trade with the Americans is four times greater than our trade with all other countries combined. One-third of our total economy is dependent on trade, and 80% of it is with the U.S.

Moreover, 70% of the goods that cross the Canada-U.S. border are free of tariffs and have been for years. Even on those goods subject to tariffs, the duty is, on average, only 8% in Canada and 5% in the U.S.

In fact, 75% of all Canada-U.S. tariffs that existed in 1947 have been eliminated over the years. Before the Canadian-American free trade deal was struck last October, we already had something akin to a free trade zone. The free trade pact confirms and strengthens a trading relationship that the two countries have developed over many decades.

But the pact does not establish a common market or an economic union, because both countries -- for sound economic and cultural reasons -- have insisted that a broad range of goods and services now traded be excluded from the deal.

The hysterical attacks against free trade in the name of water protection can be seen for what they are -- rhetoric disguised as analysis, emotion presented as reason, bias masquerading as truth. The fact is, Canada and the United States have much more free trade now than the phantom fighters acknowledge. And the two countries will not have the totally wide-open border under the free trade deal that critics would have us believe.

Nor is free trade either a departure from our history or a betrayal of what it means to be a Canadian. Canadian government leaders from Sir John A. Macdonald to Sir Wilfrid Laurier to Mackenzie King right through to those in our own time have sought the very kind of free trade agreement we have now virtually achieved. In Sir John A.'s case, he followed the high-tariff route only because attempts to get a free trade deal with the U.S. failed.

Those who suggest the free trade agreement will alter Canadians' fundamental vision of their country simply have not read their history.

Still less have they learned anything from it. Particularly preposterous were the arguments made some months ago that Canadian social programs -- medicare, unemployment insurance, family allowances and the like -- would be sacrificed on the high altar of free trade. The charge completely ignored the fact that those very programs were developed in parallel with our country's burgeoning trade with the United States over the years. The biggest threat to Canadian social programs, and to cultural and other ones, including environmental protection measures, is not free trade but protectionism and national bankruptcy. Nations do not grow and prosper by hiding behind trade walls; they develop by producing goods and services and by marketing them with a vengeance both at home and abroad.

Ladies and gentlemen, those of you reduced to watching House of Commons debates on television this summer will have noticed that the Opposition parties no longer dwell on cultural, regional development and health care programs in their intemperate assaults against free trade. Water exports have become the new battleground. The reason is simple: early fear-mongering on other fronts could not be sustained after the final text was released. Having failed to whip up a storm over what was in the agreement, the critics had no choice but to attack what was not in it. The greater the omission, it seemed, the stronger the candidate for assault. By that standard, what could be a better target than the greatest omission of all -- water resources? Indeed, what could have stronger emotional appeal than saving every Canadian's birthright in the face of a thirsty Uncle Sam?

Certainly, for Canadians, water is central and, therefore, easily exploited as a political issue. We ski on it, we sail over it and we fish in it. We use it to refresh our spirits, transport our goods and lure our tourists. We baptize our children in it. And, of course, we drink it to survive.

Water is, beyond doubt, Canada's most valuable resource. Our rivers provided our early transportation corridors, and virtually every Canadian city and town sprung up on the banks of one waterway or another. Although we tend to take water for granted, and often overuse and abuse it, our economy is more dependent on that natural resource than any other.

Why, then, should anyone be surprised that free trade opponents are soaking the Canadian flag in water?

Stripped of all the fluff and puffery, the free trade detractors' arguments on water exports are as simple as they are groundless. Essentially, the tactic is to wrench out of context words and phrases in the FTA or in related international trade agreements, principally the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the GATT). A huge leap of logic, bordering on the metaphysical, is then taken to demonstrate that, whether or not water resources are explicitly covered in the trade agreement, Canada is compelled to sell its water to the U.S.

Consider this insight from The Toronto Star (May 19th): "Water is a 'good' -- like newsprint, computers, t-shirts, or other products covered by the tariff schedule of the GATT . . ." Therefore, The Star argued, the Canada-U.S. agreement, which is in large measure based on GATT provisions, covers water resources as a tradeable commodity. The conclusion is that we are thus obliged to sell our water to the U.S. under the FTA.

And yet Frank Stone, who represented Canada at GATT, in Geneva, has written: "Water diversion has never been discussed in the GATT, and any suggestion that GATT covers water diversions or inter-basin transfers would be hooted down in Geneva by GATT member-countries."

The Toronto Star-type argument can be made, even as sophistry, only if one fails to differentiate between a) water in limited quantities in containers and b) water in its natural free-flowing state, as an integral part of a country's geography and environment.

The former has long been covered by international trading rules, to which Canada itself subscribes. The latter has never been covered, and likely never will be.

Canada already exports containerized water and has done so for generations. Every time a resident of Boston opens a bottle of Moosehead Ale from the Maritimes, he or she supports \$200 million a year in Canadian water exports in the brewery industry alone. A multitude of other products that contain mostly water cross the 49th parallel from both sides. Who among us would want to see that trade stopped? And what right-minded individual thinks either country's sovereignty is threatened by it?

By the same token, how is the national interest of Canada or the United States undermined because communities such as St. Stephen in New Brunswick, Calais in Maine, Gretna in Manitoba, Neche in North Dakota, Coutts in Alberta, and Sweetgrass in Montana long ago agreed to share drinking water systems to reduce costs? And, surely, only the most militant jingoist would oppose limited water exports by tanker of the kind currently contemplated in British Columbia and Quebec -- provided rigorous environmental standards are respected.

Let there be no mistake on the subject. To the extent that water is addressed in the FTA, the agreement merely removes, over a 10-year period, the U.S. customs duty of 4/10ths of a cent a litre on Canadian beverage water and the 10.2% Canadian duty on imports of U.S. water. The situation concerning cross-border trade on water is the same as it has been for 40 years. That's because the relevant provision in the free trade agreement was lifted, in large measure, from the GATT under the chapter on Beverages, Spirits and Vinegar.

The other type of water export -- large-scale sales based on diversions from one river basin to another -- is completely outside the purview of both the FTA and the GATT. Any decision to divert Canadian water to the U.S. is Canada's to make and Canada's alone. Again, this Government flatly opposes water exports of that type.

Even if water in its natural state were in the agreement -- and it is not -- the FTA does not oblige either country to sell anything to the other, least of all water. The agreement merely provides common rules for bi-national commerce in goods that are traded. Since Canada does not make large-scale exports of water resources to the United States, and never will, these common rules of commerce are irrelevant in that connection.

What is more, the GATT specifically permits member-countries to restrict the export of a natural resource like water for environmental protection reasons. Those are precisely the grounds on which large-scale water exports are opposed in the Government's November 1987 Federal Water Policy.

Despite all the fences around Canada's water to protect it from the phalanx of phantoms fought daily on the floor of the House of Commons by the Opposition, for greater certainty the Government has introduced an amendment to the free trade implementing legislation. Specifically, a clause has been added to specify that nothing in either the Act or the FTA itself applies to natural surface and ground water.

In any event, Thomas Niles, the U.S. Ambassador to Canada, when questioned about water in the free trade context, responded: "Water is not even an appropriate subject."

For his part, U.S. trade representative Clayton Yeutter, himself an expert on water resources, has said: "I don't think anybody in Canada should be concerned that water supplies are going to be committed to Americans. That will be a decision of the Government of Canada."

Ladies and gentlemen, because the free trade deal has nothing to do with water in its natural, free-flowing state, the

FTA neither compels nor prohibits water exports. As a water-management issue, the subject must be dealt with on its own merits. The Government has already detailed its position in the Federal Water Policy: we oppose any large-scale export of water and any large-scale inter-basin diversion for that purpose. In our view, the country has been blessed with its share of fresh water -- but its share only. We Canadians need to keep every drop we have to meet either current or future needs.

What is more, inter-basin diversions necessary for large-scale water exports would inflict irreparable harm on the natural environment and on society, especially in the North, where the ecology is particularly delicate and where the effects on Native cultures would be devastating.

When I brought down the Federal Water Policy, I served notice, in the document itself, that I intended to introduce legislation to give full effect to the policy. I am happy to inform you that, less than two hours ago, I tabled in the House of Commons that legislation. The legislation will prohibit large-scale water exports of any kind throughout the country. It provides for stiff penalties of up to \$1 million a day and three years in prison for violators. It will bind not only the private sector but also government -- at all levels.

The Government of Ontario, for one, recently introduced a Bill to licence and levy fees on inter-basin water transfers, including for export purposes. As Canada's Minister of the Environment, I cannot stop the Ontario Government from passing such a Bill. But I do have the constitutional and the ministerial authority to prevent large-scale water exports from Ontario or from any other Canadian province or territory. Ladies and gentlemen, I have every intention of exercising that authority if the need arises, and I have the full support of the Prime Minister and my Cabinet colleagues on the matter.

In addition to banning large-scale water exports, my Bill will place strict controls on small-scale exports while providing for federal-provincial agreements to administer a licencing regime. Let me stress that no licence will be granted without a full environmental assessment. And I will have the authority to deny any licence application, or to attach stringent conditions to any permit, to ensure that environmental and other national interests are fully protected.

Our Government has amended its trade legislation to remove the override clause that would have rendered the FTA paramount over any other piece of legislation in the event of inconsistencies between the two. The public can thus be assured that the legislation I tabled this morning, although fully consistent with the FTA, will not be eclipsed by it.

Ladies and gentlemen, the water export issue is at once complex and simple -- too complex for the non-expert to understand fully; very easy for demagogues to exploit for partisan or ideological purposes. You, the officials and experts of the Conservation Authorities of Ontario, are well positioned to help the public by bringing to the water export debate vast knowledge and common sense. In the interests of an informed public, I urge you to become more active in that debate.

For more than four decades, you have provided leadership for us all on resource management questions. I pay tribute to you for your public service, I thank you for your fine example, and I wish you much continued success in your valuable work.

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